DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 410 419 CE 074 586

AUTHOR	Owens, Tom
TITLE	Washington School-to-Work Evaluation Report.
INSTITUTION	Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, OR. Education and Work Program.
SPONS AGENCY	Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, Olympia.; Washington Office of the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Olympia.
PUB DATE	1997-06-13
NOTE	141p.; For related documents, see ED 403 399-401.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Education; Career Counseling; Case Studies; Consortia; Core Curriculum; Day Programs; *Education Work Relationship; Educational Counseling; Educational Improvement; Educational Objectives; Enrollment; Financial Support; Flexible Progression; Graduation Requirements; *Integrated Curriculum; Out of School Youth; Parent School Relationship; Partnerships in Education; *Program Development; Program Effectiveness; Questionnaires; Rural Areas; School Business Relationship; School Community Relationship; School Districts; Secondary Education; State Surveys; *Statewide Planning; Student Evaluation; Student Participation; Tables (Data); Teacher Participation; Unions; *Vocational Education; Youth Programs
IDENTIFIERS	*Washington

ABSTRACT

The extent and quality of school-to-work (STW) programs in the state of Washington were evaluated through a survey of all school districts receiving state STW funds and case studies of programs in four school districts (Bethel, Methow, Sumner, and Wapato), one consortium (Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium in Clark County), and two extended-day programs for out-of-school youth (Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center and Career Link Academy, Seattle). Of the 69 grant recipients surveyed, 67 completed surveys. It was concluded that the awarding of state STW funds has resulted in statistically significant growth in all the following areas: integration of vocational and academic learning; career pathways; career and academic counseling; learner goals and performance; partnerships with business industry, and labor; and active participation of educators. In 1996, 27,792 students in grades 7-12 participated in structured STW experiences. State funds were used primarily for staff development, curriculum development, equipment/materials, and release time for teachers to plan and work together. Several problems were noted, including general insecurity about future funding and difficulties in implementing school-to-work in some rural schools. (Thirteen tables are included. Appended are a composite set of site visitation questions and the 1996-97 Washington State School-to-Work Survey.) (MN)

ED 410 419

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

RESEARCH REPORT

WASHINGTON SCHOOL-TO-WORK EVALUATION REPORT

Dr. Tom Owens, Associate Director

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June 13, 1997

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EVALUATION REPORT

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We wish to thank the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) and the Washington State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) for their significant role in directing and funding this work. Carilyn Norris at OSPI, Ray Harry at the SBCTC, and David Pavelchek and Vince Schueler at the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board (WTECB) were of help in reviewing the drafts of the implementation survey and this final report.

The case study site reports could not have been completed without the assistance of many people. At the end of each case study report we acknowledge the site visitation members as well as those who were interviewed. Here we share special appreciation for the NWREL team leaders and the key contact persons for each of the seven sites.

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Finally we appreciate Kate Warziniack for doing the word processing, and Judy Blankenship and Dennis Wakeland for editing the document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

Over the last six years the Washington state legislature has invested over four million dollars to enable schools to plan and implement school-to-work-related programs (HB 1820 and HB 2359). The legislature is interested in determining how the funds have been used and what the impacts have been. As a result, the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) arranged through the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges (SBCTC) to contract with the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (NWREL) to conduct a two-part evaluation consisting of (1) case studies of seven sites, and (2) an implementation survey of all sites.

Purposes and Procedures

In the fall of 1996, with input from the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, OSPI, and SBCTC, NWREL developed and administered a Washington School-to-Work Transition Survey for all districts receiving state school-to-work funds. Results of that survey are described in this report following the Introduction and Summary of Findings.

This evaluation study was intended to (1) document the level of implementation of school-to-work in Washington, (2) identify strengths and weaknesses in selected school-to-work sites, and (3) provide useful information to the legislature and policymakers regarding continued funding of school-to-work efforts.

While written surveys are useful in obtaining judgments of school-to-work coordinators regarding the status of their programs and the number of students and community people involved in various school-to-work activities, they do not provide a rich understanding of what is actually occurring in these communities. Thus, case studies were designed to provide an in-depth view of seven school-to-work sites across the state. Each site visit took two or three days and involved a team of two to eight people led by a NWREL staff person as the team coordinator. Other volunteer members of the study teams included education leaders and representatives from business, labor, and government.

The sites visited were four school districts (Bethel, Methow, Sumner, and Wapato); one consortium, (Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium, Clark County); and two extended-day programs for out-of-school youth (Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center and Career Link Academy, Seattle). These sites were selected to present diversity in size, geographic location, and types of student served.

Summary of Findings

The Washington School-to-Work Transition Survey was mailed to grantees receiving state school-to-work funds. In most cases the grantees were school districts, although two consortia were included. Responses were received from 67 of the 69 grantees surveyed. Results analyzed in March 1997 indicate that:

1. A statistically significant growth was reported for the period from before districts received school-to-work funds to the present time in all six key areas of emphasis: (1) integration of vocational and academic learning, (2) career pathways, (3) career and academic counseling, (4) learner goals and performance, (5) partnerships with business, industry, and labor, and (6) active participation of educators.

2. Over 90 percent of the districts reported that students are participating in various school-to-work strategies such as career guidance, listening to guest speakers, field trips to businesses, and participating in Running Start (21 strategies were listed as possible activities).

3. Over 145,000 students participated in career explorations and listening to guest speakers. These activities each involved over 1,000 businesses. Over 75,000 students participated in career pathways, and 10,911 students were involved in internships.

4. A total of 27,792 students in grades seven to 12 participated in structured school-to-work experiences in 1996. These included students of color, those with disabilities, and academically talented as well as low achieving students. In the 67 schools, 32 percent of all seniors were in a structured, work-based learning experience.

5. Over half of the districts reported business and community involvement in each of the following activities: providing curriculum development assistance in defining program outcomes; promoting Tech Prep; supporting staff development for counselors and teachers through workplace visits and discussions; providing speakers for career days; establishing student awards or scholarships; providing equipment or materials, and participating in student internships.

6. State school-to-work funds were used primarily for staff development curriculum development, equipment or materials, and release time for teachers to plan and work together. Of these funds, only 17 percent was used for general administration of school-to-work in the districts.

Perhaps the most significant strength the study teams observed during the site visits was the wide acceptance and understanding of school-to-work as a concept, and subsequent development of various school-to-work elements as viable, positive, works in progress. The principles and goals of school-to-work are now generally accepted by employers, parents, students, and educators. Community stakeholders are coming together to form local partnerships, schools are beginning to integrate academic and occupational learning, and students are increasingly involved in significant school-to-work experiences. Other common program strengths include the following:

- Real efforts are being made to expand school-to-work to middle and elementary schools as part of a comprehensive and systemic K-12 system. Career development activities such as discussion of career paths, interest surveys, career days, and guest speakers are happening in elementary and middle schools, and we saw increasing articulation between middle and high schools.

- School districts are committed to adequately supporting their educational reform efforts through far-reaching staff development programs such as concentrated in-service training, summer internships for teachers with local businesses, and sending staff to school-to-work conferences.

- Most school districts have made a strong commitment to system-wide school improvement, and realistically understand the time and dedication it takes to "move" a system. The integration of business needs, student outcomes, curriculum and assessment development, staff development, and the development of community resources is helping to build school-to-work as a system.

- Rural communities are making great strides in building school-to-work programs that represent educational reform, while continuing to reflect the rural community and its values.

While the study teams saw many examples of effective school-to-work leadership and improved programs, they also saw areas of concern. The lack of a comprehensive K-12 guidance plan in some districts, and the lack of integration of the separate elements of school-to-work into a single system for all students, remain the primary challenges. Following are other areas of concern:

- School-to-work is still optional rather than mandated in Washington schools. This limits the full potential of school-to-work for all students, and threatens the prospect of establishing school-to-work as a system that can serve as an umbrella for school reform efforts.

- There is a general feeling of insecurity about future funding, and worry about continued support for school-to-work efforts already under way.

- A division still exists in some schools between vocational and academic learning. School-to-work activities are still not fully integrated with academic content, and some academic staff are not yet convinced of the value of job shadowing and other work-related experiences.

- Some rural schools still find it difficult to implement school-to-work. Not enough electives are available to support the career path model, and long distances to employers restrict the number of available work-based opportunities. Many rural areas also lack a diversified employer base to support work-based learning in all career pathway areas.

In comparing the school-to-work implementation observed in 1994 with that observed in 1997, the following changes stand out:

- More students in K-12 are actively participating in school-to-work activities.
- Staff development, including summer internships in business and industry, has enabled more academic and vocational teachers to better show applications of school content to the workplace.
- Labor has become more involved in school-to-work.
- Many districts are beginning to treat school-to-work as a way to reform education for all students rather than as a special program for some.

INTRODUCTION AND SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This Washington state school-to-work evaluation report provides a summary of findings for seven case study sites: four school districts (Bethel, Methow, Sumner, and Wapato); one consortium (Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium, Clark County); and two extended-day programs for out-of-school youth (Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center and Career Link Academy, Seattle).

The intent of the site visits was to interview, observe, and gather relevant support data to describe and assess school-to-work. Study team leaders were asked to organize their data and observations by context, program components, program strengths, program concerns, and promising practices.

NWREL prepared an 11-page composite set of interview questions to guide the site visits, along with a school-to-work classroom observation guide. Although the initial design covered eight areas of investigation, we recognized that time constraints would required a sharper focus; therefore, we emphasized areas 3, 4, 7, and 8 of those shown below.

1. The environment. Into what kind of educational and economic environment has school-to-work been introduced, and how have earlier educational reform efforts of initiatives such as Tech Prep affected the development of school-to-work?
2. Objectives of school-to-work. When, how, and by whom was the school-to-work initiative begun? What were its intended objectives?
3. Program components: What is the school-to-work program/effort? What was added beyond what was already being done in the program?
4. Student participation and outcomes. Who takes part in school-to-work, how do they perform, and how well do they make the envisioned transition to employment and/or postsecondary education? Who may be left out of school-to-work?
5. Program cost: What does it cost to operate a school-to-work program, beyond the cost of existing education programs?
6. State agency assistance: How has the state supported efforts to develop and implement school-to-work?
7. Program reflections: What are the perceived major strengths and weaknesses of the school-to-work program?
8. Promising practices: What are the innovative and successful features of school-to-work here that might be adapted by other communities?

Each study team followed a common procedure:

- Reviewed background documents such as grant proposals; budget; the NWREL School-to-Work Implementation Survey; press releases and promotional materials; handouts to educators, parents, and students; and progress reports.

- Interviewed key educators (administrators, teachers, and counselors), parents, business and labor partners, and community representatives.

- Observed a sample of applied academic and technical classes that are part of the school-based learning component of school-to-work.

- Conducted focus groups with a sample of six to nine high school students who have participated in work-based learning activities.

- Visited worksites to observe students and talk with the students and their supervisors.

Summary of Findings

The summary of findings is organized around major strengths and concerns found across the sites visited. What follows are more specific strengths and concerns organized around school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities. Perhaps the most significant strength the study teams observed during the site visits was the wide acceptance of school-to-work as a concept, and the development of the various school-to-work elements as viable, positive, works in progress. The principles and goals of school-to-work are now generally accepted by employers, parents, students and educators. Community stakeholders are coming together to form local partnerships. Schools are beginning to integrate academic and occupational learning, and students are increasingly involved in significant school-to-work experiences. Other common program strengths included the following:

- Real efforts are being made to expand school-to-work to middle and elementary schools as part of a comprehensive and systemic K-12 system. Career development activities such as discussion of career paths, interest surveys, career days, and guest speakers are happening in elementary and middle schools, and we saw increasing articulation between middle and high schools.

- School districts are committed to adequately supporting their educational reform efforts through far-reaching staff development programs such as concentrated in-service training, summer internships for teachers with local businesses, and sending staff to school-to-work conferences.

- Most school districts have made a strong commitment to system-wide school improvement, and realistically understand the time and dedication it takes to "move" a system. The integration of business needs, student outcomes, curriculum and assessment development, staff development, and the development of community resources is helping to build school-to-work as a system.

- Rural communities are making great strides in building school-to-work programs that represent educational reform, while continuing to reflect the rural community and its values.

While the study teams saw many examples of effective school-to-work leadership and improved programs, they also saw areas of concern. The lack of a comprehensive K-12 guidance plan in some districts, and the lack of integration of the separate elements of school-to-work into a single system for all students, remain the primary challenges. Following are other areas of concern:

- School-to-work is still optional rather than mandated in Washington schools. This limits the full potential of school-to-work for all students, and threatens the prospect of establishing school-to-work as a system that can serve as an umbrella for school reform efforts.

- There is a general feeling of insecurity about future funding, and worry about continued support for school-to-work efforts already under way.

- A division still exists in some schools between vocational and academic learning. School-to-work activities are still not fully integrated with academic content, and some academic staff are not yet convinced of the value of job shadowing and other work-related experiences.

- Some rural schools still find it difficult to implement school-to-work. Not enough electives are available to support the career path model, and long distances to employers restrict the number of available work-based opportunities. Many rural areas also lack a diversified employer base to support work-based learning in all career pathway areas.

Listed below is a summary of strengths and concerns observed in the case study sites organized around the three essential elements of school-to-work: school-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities. Each strength is stated briefly and then supported by findings from one or more sites.

School-Based Learning

Strengths

Among the most important strengths of school-based learning are block scheduling, portfolios, integrated instruction, counseling and career development, staff development, and extended-day activities. Each is discussed in detail below.

Block scheduling. Many teachers now favor block scheduling, recognizing that it is conducive for project work, reduces the number of separate preparations, and gives students more concentrated time for hands-on experiences such as internships. At Methow Valley, for example, a four-period day of 80 minutes per period allows students to work on projects in a sustained manner as well as pursue community-based learning within the longer time blocks. In addition, an advocacy period used for boosting reading skills and addressing curriculum needs within the existing academic schedule has been created within the block schedule

Portfolios. Portfolios are highly successful, and according to some teachers, have brought about more changes in students than any other school-to-work component. At Wapato High School, all students are required to assemble a portfolio with four sections, including the student planner, the learner, the employee, and the citizen. Spanaway High School has produced an impressive portfolio system that is commercially available to other schools. Methow Valley uses a "portfolio information" packet for each student that covers all the information students need to systematically track their progress through high school.

Integrated instruction. Academic SCANS and vocational competencies are being integrated in a way that creates meaning for many students. The Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium Curriculum provided integration training to 16 teams of five educators each, representing eight high schools. The training focused on the process of integrating academic and vocational programs and their instructional objectives.

At Wapato, curriculum integration has a good start with classes that stress skills in research, writing, oral communications, and other competencies aligned to SCANS. In the junior year social studies class, students further focus their interests with a career research project.

Counseling and career development. All districts we visited recognized the need to integrate vocational counseling and career development with academic curriculum and work-based learning. At Sumner, all 6th graders were brought to the high school to learn about the career paths, and all district students are involved in career development activities from 7th through 9th grade. At Methow Valley, all high school students complete a graduation plan that lays out their program of studies for the four years and includes vocational options provided within the school's academic program.

Staff development. There is generally good support across the sites for staff development activities such as business internships, school-to-work conferences, inservice training, and making time available for staff to visit other programs. Strong administrative support, commitment, and enthusiasm are having a positive influence on school-to-work. Teachers are more likely to take risks in this environment.

At Sumner, five teachers participated in the Workplace Applications Project. They went as teams into businesses to learn about the skills needed by today's workers and to observe how school subjects are being applied in the workplace. This motivated teachers to develop classroom curriculum modules based on what they observed in business and industry. Also at Sumner, a very successful retreat brought together business, labor, and community leaders to work with educators on school-to-work issues.

At Methow, grant money supported time for teachers to plan and develop materials together. The Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium staff development program, in partnership with other entities, provides training in curriculum integration, partnership development, comprehensive career guidance, and elementary implementation strategies.

Extended-day programs. The extended-day programs we visited require special mention as school reform efforts that are flexible, competency-based, and focused on the socio-economic concerns of their students as well as academic and technical training. Both the Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center and Career Link Academy provide students with the extra individualized attention important in turning around the lives of out-of-school youth. In focus group interviews students described the programs as "a second chance" or "my last chance." They instill leadership skills and allow students to see positive attributes in themselves they had never known existed.

Career Link Academy has an open entry/open exit policy that better allows students to balance the demands of family and/or work with GED prep or technical training. At Kitsap Peninsula Vocation Skills Center, a student services specialist works closely with students to help them reenroll back into the educational system, find specialized training opportunities, and find appropriate work experience opportunities in the community. The Center also works closely with the JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) to provide living expenses for students while they participate in work experiences.

Concerns

Isolated curricula. Classroom observations at some sites revealed both academic and vocational instructors teaching their subjects in isolation. Content was not related to other subjects taught, or to applications in the workplace. At Wapato, study team members noted that connections between the world of work and academics were limited, with missed opportunities to show students the relevance of academic subject matter.

The Methow Valley site visit team noted that school-to-work instructors have voiced a desire to improve the quality of their own instruction by building stronger linkages between work and school. They cited as an example the course on the life cycle of salmon that has been developed by the staff of the Winthrop National Fish Hatchery staff, and ask: How could this course and the expertise of hatchery staff be linked to the science program of the school?

Academic achievement. In some school districts, academic achievement has not been a major focus of the school-to-work program. The focus of school-to-work has been primarily on career exploration and course/career planning. One recent Sumner High School graduate, now at the University of Washington, took time to prepare a two-page statement drawing attention to the need for more advanced classes at the high school, and suggesting that the faculty give more attention to counseling and preparing college-bound students.

The Methow Valley study team suggested that efforts should be made to experiment with ways to build the academic program around student interests. For example, what would a program look like that was built around the career areas of veterinary medicine, or fisheries biology? How would a local veterinarian fit it, or the Fish and Game Department, the school science program, and the English class? For some students this may be far more productive than the current program.

Career pathways. Although career pathways do help students follow a course sequence, students are sometimes placed in a course inappropriately. They may be signed up for a course that fulfills pathway requirements, but transcripts are not checked to verify if a student should be taking the course. According to one instructor at Wapato, school-to-work career planning is a very good tool but the counselors do not have the time to really assess how students are doing.

Staff recruitment. Especially in the extended-day programs, attracting and recruiting qualified teachers and maintaining an adequate professional development program for faculty remains a challenge. Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center teachers need to have a standard teaching credential as well as a vocational certificate, with continual opportunities for upgrading their skills and knowledge of industry standards.

Financial. Many school administrators and staff expressed concern about inadequate funding, and fears that reform efforts already instituted will be cut back. Sumner reported that in order to continue to work successfully with students, it needs funding for additional clerical support, expendable supplies, maintenance of smaller classes, and a caseworker to work with students. At the two extended-day programs, student financial barriers and financial support for day care and transportation were cited as concerns.

Work-Based Learning

Strengths

Partnerships with business, labor and other community organizations. Significant participation from business, labor, and other community groups was reported by all sites. These groups not only help students identify the basic competencies they must have for successful employment, but provide workplace experiences where students can explore their career interests and try out their skills. Such experiences help motivate students to remain in school and apply their work-based learning in the classroom. Compared to our 1994 study there is now significantly greater involvement of labor in school-to-work.

The Methow Valley as a Classroom program provides students in a rural area with a broad exposure to vocational experiences and effectively involves community instructors from local businesses, government agencies, community groups and individuals with expertise in areas of interest to the students.

The Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium, comprised of eight Clark County school districts, has developed an effective school-to-work structure by reaching out to new partners such as Taiwan Semiconductor, while continuing to work with established partners such as Hewlett-Packard and Wendel Dental, and maintaining community partnerships with the Youth Initiative and YWCA.

Use of technology: Technology is playing an increasingly important role in work-based learning. In collaboration with the Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium, a Partnership in Education Web page was developed by the Education Service District, and is potentially a cost-effective tool to link schools to businesses for the benefit of the youth in the area.

In the Yakima Valley, where Wapato School District is located, the Private Industry Council is using part of its federal funding to develop a county-wide MetSys database system that, among other features, will coordinate work-based learning and job shadow experiences throughout the county by bringing agencies, schools, programs, employers, and providers together.

Kitsap Peninsula Skills Center is in the process of converting the work-based and academic competencies for all of its courses to bar codes for use with a computer database. This system will provide an effective method for maintaining an accurate record of the competency attainments for each student.

The Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium is developing an infrastructure of technology for school personnel to communicate with the business sector and the community.

School-to-work coordinators. Many districts are realizing the importance of hiring full-time staff to help coordinate student work-based experiences with businesses. In Clark County, school-to-work coordinators have been hired in school districts to facilitate student placements in the workplace, job shadows, mentorships, internships, and employment opportunities.

Concerns

Monitoring of work-based learning. While in some school districts relatively little work-based learning is occurring systematically, in at least one district the very success of the program poses a challenge. The number of students in Bethel participating in work-based learning has almost doubled in the past two years, and effective monitoring of placements provides a major challenge for the school staff. Job development with businesses takes time. Finding the right employer/site for each student, and ensuring it is an educational experience and not just a job requires dedicated staff who have sufficient time for placing and monitoring student performance.

High-risk students. There are not enough coordinators to work with all the students who want and need placements. This is especially an issue at Challenger High School, where placing high-risk students with business is both a challenge and liability risk. Also, as pointed out at Wapato, businesses that invest time in providing job placements are often let down by students. It takes a lot of time to negotiate the problem, "smooth the waters," and problem solve. Coordinators often have to "hold the business person's hand" through the process of working with students.

Liability issues. Insuring safe, appropriate placements for students, attending to insurance issues related to the transportation to and from sites, and covering the cost of conducting background checks on potential worksites must all be taken into consideration by school districts. There are also liability concerns on the part of small businesses who take responsibility for the safety of students.

Job shadowing. Job shadowing is generally a good way to introduce freshman and sophomores to the workplace, but some juniors and seniors felt their job shadowing experiences occurred too late in their school experiences. Juniors and seniors interviewed by the Columbia River Consortium site visit team said they felt their job shadowing occurred too late in their K-12 experience. An earlier job shadow experience would have helped them make better choices among the high school courses available to them.

Cross-site communication. Most sites have not done an adequate job of enabling participating businesses to communicate with one another about their school-to-work experiences. Employers sometimes voice the desire to meet with colleagues from other companies to share what they are doing with students. Few opportunities are provided for such exchanges.

Connecting Activities

Strengths

Senior projects represent a good school-to-work curriculum component that require students to link their school work to real-work experience outside their schools.

Done well, senior projects combine the integrated process skills of researching a topic, writing it up, and presenting it to others with the career and educational planning students have been doing for life beyond high school.

Use of technology. Computer software programs and using the Internet assist teachers in integrating standards into their curricula. At Bethel a computer program provides teachers with the appropriate essential learnings, SCANS content, and assessment standards that relate to the academic content of the instructional module they are creating. Next year, Wapato teachers will be trained in integrated technology (the Web and on-line services); those receiving training will become trainers of other teachers.

The development of the Performance Learning Manual and computer program at Bethel are examples of the effective use of technology to integrate work-based and school-based education across the K-12 curriculum. The wide adoption of the WOIS system provides junior high and high school students with an effective tool for exploring occupational opportunities.

Community agencies. Involvement of the PIC at Wapato and in other communities helps bring together community and workplace participation outside of the boundaries of the education community. This broader approach reaches out to underserved populations and networks with organizations and businesses on a wider level. Among the connecting activities of the Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium are strategic planning events such as Tech Prep articulation agreements, technical-professional career days, a Partners in Education forum, and the development of a county-wide portfolio addressing a certificate of mastery, skill standards for employability and Washington state Essential Academic Learning requirements.

Vocational student organizations. Through FFA or DECA clubs, students report they have gained exposure to professionals and real job situations such as livestock competitions and student entrepreneurial ventures.

Workplace credit. Students can use work-based learning to gain certification or clinical hours needed in various occupations such as health. Challenger and Spanaway high schools have continued to strengthen and expand the programs they contracted with the Pierce County Health Department, where students participate in courses and work-based experiences designed to assist them in obtaining nursing assistant certification (CAN), or gain clinical hours toward training in medical/dental related occupations.

Concerns

The integration of school-to-work activities with academic studies remains an area of concern. Teachers and community instructors voice different perceptions of why there were not more connecting activities. The attitude of some academic teachers is that work-based learning is irrelevant, especially for the college-bound student. They feel such youth miss out on essential course content needed to succeed on college placement tests. Teachers themselves sometimes lack any direct exposure to the workplace.

Staff development. While there has been much progress in helping both academic and vocational teachers gain current workplace experience, the number of academic teachers who participate in such internships is still small. In order for the attitude of the majority of academic teachers to change in seeing relevance of work-based learning as opportunities for students to apply what they are learning in the classroom, many more teachers need to participate in structured work-based learning experiences geared to helping them improve the relevance of their curricula to life outside the classroom.

Lack of integrated curricula. A division still exists in many schools between vocational and academic learning. Everyone interviewed at Methow Valley identified the lack of linkage of work-based learning experiences with academic courses as a concern. Few activities could be identified in which community-based learning experiences were used to enhance learning in the classroom. Some academic staff do not see a value in job shadowing and other work-related experiences.

Special populations. More attention is needed to provide services to the underserved.

The Sumner study team found that while services to special needs students were very inclusive at the junior high level, involving a team teaching and case management approach, there were very limited community-based training opportunities available at the high school level.

Parents. In some school districts, the role of parents in school-to-work is limited, and there appears to be no organized parent group. Parents do attend a freshman orientation meeting and LEAP presentations, however.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

School-to-work implementation surveys were administered to all school-to-work districts in Washington. School-to-work has grown both in quality and quantity over the past two years. For the period from before districts received school-to-work funds to the present time, a statistically significant growth in level of implementation was reported in all six key areas of emphasis: (1) integration of vocational and academic learning, (2) career pathways, (3) career and academic counseling, (4) learner goals and performance, (5) partnerships with business, industry, and labor, and (6) active participation of educators.

School-to-work in Washington state has expanded dramatically in many areas over the past several years. For example, in 1994-95 there were 28,554 students engaged in career explorations. In 1996-97 the number jumped to 150,253 students in 319 schools, involving 1,061 businesses or community organizations. Similarly, the number of students involved in mentorships has increased from 1,917 in 1994-95 to 7,579 in 1996-97.

Perhaps the most significant strength the study teams observed during the seven site visits was the wide acceptance and understanding of school-to-work as a concept, and subsequent development of various school-to-work elements as viable, positive, works in progress. The principles and goals of school-to-work are now generally accepted by employers, parents, students, and educators. Community stakeholders are coming together to form local partnerships, schools are beginning to integrate academic and occupational learning, and students are increasingly involved in significant school-to-work experiences.

In comparing the school-to-work implementation observed in 1994-95 with that observed in 1996-97, the following changes stand out:

- More students in K-12 are actively participating in school-to-work activities.
- Staff development, including summer internships in business and industry, has enabled more academic and vocational teachers to better show applications of school content in the workplace.
- Labor has become more aware of and involved in school-to-work.
- Many districts are beginning to treat school-to-work as a framework for systemic educational reform for all students rather than as a special program for some.

While this study found many areas of strengths it also identified some areas where future improvements could be made. These areas are listed here and serve as a focus for our recommendations.

Recommendation 1: All Students

There is still the perception among a number of parents and even teachers that school-to-work is appropriate only for students intending to go directly to the workplace after leaving high school. Washington state's recent labor market data makes it clear that many jobs today and in the future will require at least some postsecondary education. Educators need to develop a range of work-based learning experiences that are well integrated with school learning and that challenge every student. It will be important for schools to collect and examine data on student participation in various school-to-work activities to determine if any groups are under-represented, and to correct this situation where it may occur.

Recommendation 2: Articulation

While Tech Prep has made considerable progress over the past few years in articulating curricula between secondary and post-secondary levels, improvement is needed in integrating school-to-work activities between elementary, middle, and secondary schools. Steps in this direction would include staff from each level visiting those from other levels to see what school-to-work activities are occurring, and to identify how educators at higher levels might build on the experiences students have at the lower levels. Districts that have not already done so should develop and implement comprehensive cross-level approaches in areas such as guidance and career development.

Recommendation 3: Staff Development

Some school staff are not yet convinced of the value of job shadowing and other work-related experiences, nor do they appreciate the value of real-world applications in their classrooms. Many schools have found summer teacher internships or other forms of work-based learning for educators to be very useful in enabling teachers to see what skills are needed in today's workplace, and to clearly understand how their course content relates beyond the classroom. We recommend that experiential forms of staff development such as teacher internships be expanded to include many more teachers as well as administrators and counselors. By extending these experiences to more educators, schools will be able to develop a critical mass of teachers and administrators who are committed to using school-to-work as a vehicle for educational reform.

Recommendation 4: Sustainability

Our case studies reveal that there is a general feeling of insecurity about future funding to continue support for the school-to-work efforts, both those under way and those planned for the future. In an atmosphere where educators are worried about whether activities they initiate will continue, it is difficult to be innovative. While federal school-to-work funds were intended by Congress to initiate the concepts and practices related to school-to-work, they were never intended to become permanent funding sources. In Washington state, a number of districts are already using other funding sources to supplement school-to-work dollars. Carl Perkins Vocational Education, Tech Prep, and SLIG grants are three of the most common sources used to supplement current school-to-work efforts. Additional funding sources, however, should be identified, and include local district funds, businesses, foundations, and other governmental sources such as labor and environment.

In addition to looking for additional funding sources for start-up processes and services, it is also important to identify other ways that successful school-to-work practices can be continued without special funding. These include assuring that the principles underlying school-to-work become integrated into the policies and mission statement of schools and districts, including school-to-work activities within a school improvement plan, and transferring school-to-work coordinators' salaries into existing school district budgets.

Recommendation 5: Continued Evaluation

Recently the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board contracted to have a student net impact evaluation conducted. This evaluation should be helpful in documenting what gains occur as a result of student participation in school-to-work activities. In addition, schools and districts continue to need help monitoring the quality of implementation of their school-to-work programs. Districts need to consistently identify and share promising practices that address critical elements of school-to-work. Effective strategies for engaging college-bound students, as well as special needs students, in quality work-based learning experiences that are integrated with their school learning and their future career plans must be defined, developed, and shared. Key outcome indicators of successful school-to-work components should be identified, benchmarked, and monitored annually to determine long-term growth. Likewise, it is recommended that students become actively engaged in learning how to evaluate their own performance, and gain experience in designing and evaluating school-to-work innovations being tried in their schools and communities.

SCHOOL-TO-WORK TRANSITION SURVEY FINDINGS

Background

The 1996-97 Washington State School-to-Work Transition Survey instrument was designed by NWREL to obtain data regarding the status of state-funded, school-to-work sites throughout Washington in relation to six characteristics identified as important for quality school-to-work in Washington, and to determine the number of students, schools, and businesses involved in specific school-to-work activities. The survey was developed and revised four times based on interactive feedback from representatives from the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board. The survey was modeled after one used by NWREL in a similar study in 1995, with some significant changes. Since the emphasis of school-to-work is now more clearly on affecting *all* students, we redefined our five levels of implementation ranging from "Not yet considered" to "Institutionalized." "Institutionalized" is now defined as "fully developed with active participation of all relevant program partners; applies to *all* students."

Survey Instrument

The school-to-work survey was mailed to all grantees in December 1996 by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction with a cover letter indicating the survey was a joint effort of all three agencies (the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction, the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges, and the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board). Following a second mailing and telephone calls to the districts, responses to the survey were received from 67 of the 69 grantees (response rate of 97 percent). Two consortia sent in separate responses from each of their districts; thus the tables in this report are based on responses from 79 actual districts. These are included in our tables. Shown below are six areas of school-to-work emphasis in Washington:

- Integration of vocational and academic learning
- Career pathways
- Career and academic counseling
- Learner goals and performance
- Business partnerships
- Active participation of educators

For each of the six areas above, a set of seven to 11 specific indicators was used. For example, under "Integration of vocational and academic learning," one indicator was "Interdisciplinary teams are involved in developing joint lesson plans." Site administrators rated each indicator on a five-point implementation scale ranging from "Not yet considered" to "Institutionalized." Stages of implementation were described as shown below:

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① *Not Yet Considered*	We're going to get to it.
② *Planning*	Committees now working on it.
③ *Early Implementation*	Still being pilot tested.
④ *Functional*	Widely applied, but still under development and/or missing participation of relevant partners; applies to *most* students.
⑤ *Institutionalized*	Fully developed with active participation of all relevant program partners; applies to *all* students.

Study Limitations

Although a more complete research strategy would have been to collect implementation data from each of the middle and high schools in districts/consortia funded by school-to-work, resource and time limitations of this study precluded the collection of data from each separate school. In a cover letter accompanying the survey, school-to-work coordinators were asked to obtain input from others in their district/consortium, as needed, to complete the survey. Two consortium directors sent the surveys out to each district in their consortium and returned the completed set to NWREL for analysis. Several consortium directors expressed frustration at having districts and high schools within their consortium operating at various levels of implementation, which precluded the consortium's ability to present an "average" rating. The NWREL researchers recognize this limitation in the data reported here. The new, statewide, student net impact evaluation now being funded for the next four years will take these concerns into consideration by using sampled high schools as the unit of analysis. Other limitations we acknowledge include the general concern in all self-report data that respondents may tend to overstate their level of implementation and that the responses were not weighted by the number of schools or students in their districts/consortia. Despite the limitations in the current study, however, the data provide a fair estimate for the entire state for the 1996-97 school year.

Findings

Shown in this section are the study findings organized around each of the six areas of emphasis.

1. Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning

This area of emphasis was composed of eight indicators. The results shown in Table 1 and the following tables display the number and percentage of responding sites at each level of implementation and an overall mean or average rating. Very few sites feel they have reached institutionalization on these indicators. The area rated the highest on Table 1 was "Vocational/technical courses utilize and reinforce academic competencies." The area rated the lowest was "Collaborative planning time each month is provided for interdisciplinary teams." Overall, site administrators indicated a statistically significant growth in the integration of vocational and academic learning since the beginning of school-to-work funding. $(p.>.001)$

Table 1
Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning

n = 79 Districts	1*	2	3	4	5	Mean
A. Interdisciplinary teams are involved in developing joint lesson plans.	16 20.3%	30 38.0%	15 19.0%	15 19.0%	3 3.8%	2.5
B. Collaborative planning time each month is provided for interdisciplinary teams.	27 34.2%	15 19.0%	17 21.5%	13 16.5%	7 8.9%	2.5
C. Project-based learning opportunities integrating technical and academic learning are provided for students.	3 3.8%	23 29.1%	31 39.2%	16 20.3%	6 7.6%	3.0
D. Academic courses utilize and reinforce technical and vocational skills/competencies. (78)	4 5.1%	27 34.6%	30 38.5%	14 17.9%	3 3.8%	2.8
E. Vocational/technical courses utilize and reinforce academic competencies.	2 2.5%	6 7.6%	22 27.8%	35 44.3%	14 17.7%	3.7
F. Course competencies reflect community expectations of what students should know and be able to do in the workplace and/or postsecondary institutions.	5 6.3%	16 20.3%	21 26.6%	27 34.2%	10 12.7%	3.3
G. Project plan provides for all students to experience work-based learning opportunities (paid and unpaid).	6 7.6%	28 35.4%	29 36.7%	5 6.3%	11 13.9%	2.8
H. Assessments of student performance reflect academic and vocational/technical integration. (78)	11 14.1%	35 44.9%	16 20.5%	14 17.9%	2 2.6%	2.5
I. At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in integration of vocational and academic learning? (78)	-- --	18 23.1%	41 52.6%	17 21.8%	2 2.6%	3.0

*1 = Not yet considered, 2 = Planning stage, 3 = Early implementation, 4 = Functional, 5 = Institutionalized

2. Career Pathways

This section was composed of seven indicators. The results are shown in Table 2. The area rated the highest was "Students explore multiple careers to help overcome stereotypes." The area rated the lowest was "Students explore different careers as they work through the career pathways." The somewhat lower rating on this indicator may be due to the fact that for many programs the career pathways are still in their first year of implementation. Overall, site administrators indicated a statistically significant growth in the career pathways since being funded. (p.>.001)

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Table 2
Multiple Flexible Educational Pathways Based on the Student's Career or Interest Area

n = 79 Districts	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
A. Students explore multiple careers to help overcome job stereotypes. (77)	27 34.6%	30 38.5%	20 25.6%	1 1.3%	-- --	3.4
B. Students explore different careers as they work through career pathways. (77)	3 3.9%	15 19.5%	20 26.0%	28 36.4%	11 14.3%	3.0
C. Students choose a career path based on their interest. (77)	3 3.9%	18 23.4%	27 35.1%	18 23.4%	11 14.3%	3.2
D. Students are able to select from an adequate number of courses relevant to their career paths. (77)	2 2.6%	21 27.3%	27 35.1%	16 20.8%	11 14.3%	3.2
E. Core curriculum and suggested electives related to students' career paths give them a clear idea of their graduation requirements and where they can go. (77)	2 2.6%	25 32.5%	19 24.7%	19 24.7%	12 15.6%	3.2
F. Students can change pathways with little or no difficulty. (77)	4 5.2%	23 29.9%	14 18.2%	22 28.6%	14 18.2%	3.2
G. Career pathway planning includes postsecondary options. (77)	4 5.2%	16 20.8%	28 36.4%	18 23.4%	11 14.3%	3.2
H. Before receiving funds for school-to-work, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in developing educational pathways? (77)	29 37.7%	33 42.9%	13 16.9%	2 2.6%	-- --	1.8
I. At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in using educational pathways to help students plan their 9-16 educational program? (77)	2 2.6%	12 15.6%	34 44.2%	21 27.3%	8 10.4%	3.3

*1 = Not yet considered, 2 = Planning stage, 3 = Early implementation, 4 = Functional, 5 = Institutionalized

3. Vocational, Career, and Academic Counseling

This section was composed of 11 indicators. The results are shown in Table 3. The area rated the highest was "Students learn about scholarships and financial aid available for postsecondary schools." The area rated the lowest was "Upon graduation from high school those students needing it receive help in job placement based on their selected career preferences." Overall, site administrators indicated a statistically significant growth in the counseling area since being funded. (p.>.001)

Table 3
Vocational, Career, and Academic Counseling

n = 79 Districts	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
A. Students in grades 9-16 are assessed on career interests. (78)	-- --	5 6.4%	19 24.4%	36 46.2%	18 23.1%	3.9
B. Students make use of school resources and personnel to make career choices.	-- --	5 6.3%	25 31.6%	35 44.3%	14 17.7%	3.7
C. Students are taking personal responsibility for their own career plans.	3 3.8%	12 15.2%	39 49.4%	19 24.1%	6 7.6%	3.2
D. Students have an individual transition plan that is being implemented and refined yearly.	2 2.5%	37 46.8%	21 26.6%	16 20.3%	3 3.8%	2.8
E. Students learn about scholarships and financial aid available for postsecondary schools.	-- --	1 1.3%	12 15.2%	27 34.2%	39 49.4%	4.3
F. Counselors receive training in career and educational counseling for students not planning to enter a four-year college program. (78)	6 7.7%	14 17.9%	25 32.1%	16 20.5%	17 21.8%	3.3
G. Students learn about associate degree program entry requirements.	1 1.3%	5 6.3%	20 25.3%	33 41.8%	20 25.3%	3.8
H. Students learn about four-year college or university entrance procedures and requirements.	-- --	-- --	12 15.2%	32 40.5%	35 44.3%	4.3
I. Students learn about military, private business, technical school, and apprenticeship entrance procedures and requirements. (77)	-- --	7 9.1%	14 18.2%	45 58.4%	11 14.3%	3.8
J. Students learn about entry-level, skilled, and professional occupations, and the education and experiences necessary to achieve specific careers.	-- --	10 12.7%	29 36.7%	26 32.9%	14 17.7%	3.6
K. Upon graduation from high school those students needing it receive help in job placement based on their selected career preference. (77)	31 40.3%	25 32.5%	14 18.2%	5 6.5%	2 2.6%	2.0
L. Before receiving funds for school-to-work, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in providing vocational and academic counseling? (78)	9 11.5%	25 32.1%	27 34.6%	15 19.2%	2 2.6%	2.7
M. At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your school district/consortium in providing vocational and academic counseling?	-- --	8 10.1%	26 32.9%	32 40.5%	13 16.5%	3.6

*1 = Not yet considered, 2 = Planning stage, 3 = Early implementation, 4= Functional, 5 = Institutionalized

4. Learning Goals and Performance

This section was composed of seven indicators. The results are shown in Table 4. The area rated the highest was "School-to-work activities are tied to the SLIG's." The area rated

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the lowest was "Essential Academic Learning Requirements are tied to school-to-work activities." Overall, site administrators indicated a statistically significant growth in this area since being funded. (p.>.001)

Table 4
Student Essential Learning Requirements, Methods of Accurately Measuring Student Performance, and Goals for Improved Student Learning

n = 79 Districts	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
A. Project goals and objectives for improved student learning are tied to the four state goals enacted in HB1209 and to Goals 2000. (75)	1 1.3%	27 36.0%	25 33.3%	16 21.3%	6 8.0%	3.0
B. Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EARLs) are tied to school-to-work activities. (77)	4 5.2%	26 33.8%	29 37.7%	12 15.6%	6 7.8%	2.9
C. Tech Prep consortium activities are tied to school-to-work activities. (76)	4 5.3%	6 7.9%	34 44.7%	26 34.2%	6 7.9%	3.3
D. School-to-work activities are tied to the Student Learning Improvement Grants (SLIGs). (77)	3 3.9%	19 24.7%	22 28.6%	22 28.6%	11 14.3%	3.2
E. The project has clear performance standards for required courses and students are expected to meet these standards. (76)	14 18.4%	24 31.6%	19 25.0%	15 19.7%	4 5.3%	2.6
F. A project mission statement has been written and guides your work. (77)	13 16.9%	16 20.8%	15 19.5%	21 27.3%	12 15.6%	3.0
G. Student assessment emphasizes performance using both traditional (such as standardized tests) and non-traditional measures. (76)	4 5.3%	20 26.3%	27 35.5%	17 22.4%	8 10.5%	3.1
H. Before receiving funds for school-to-work, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in identifying and assessing student performance on essential learning requirements? (77)	22 28.6%	43 55.8%	8 10.4%	4 5.2%	-- --	1.9
I. At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in identifying and assessing student performance on essential learning requirements? (77)	-- --	26 33.8%	37 48.1%	13 16.9%	1 1.3%	2.9

*1 = Not yet considered, 2 = Planning stage, 3 = Early implementation, 4 = Functional, 5 = Institutionalized

5. Partnerships

This section was composed of eight indicators. The results are shown in Table 5. The area rated the highest was "Student learning and training plans are monitored jointly by teachers and workplace instructors." The area rated the lowest was "Employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel decide which partners will have primary responsibility for instruction and reinforcement of particular skills." Overall, site administrators indicated a statistically significant growth in this area since being funded. (p.>.001)

Table 5
Partnerships with Local Employers, Labor Unions, Parents, and Other Community Organizations

n = 79 Districts	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
A. Educators design learning outcomes with the collaboration of employers, labor union representatives, parents, community members, and school personnel. (76)	3 3.9%	20 26.3%	25 32.9%	21 27.6%	7 9.2%	3.1
B. Educators involve employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel in curriculum development and approval. (76)	4 5.3%	18 23.7%	23 30.3%	23 30.3%	8 10.5%	3.2
C. Employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel decide which partners will have primary responsibility for instruction and reinforcement of particular skills. (77)	36 46.8%	18 23.4%	15 19.5%	5 6.5%	3 3.9%	2.0
D. Employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel jointly design and implement worksite programs for students. (77)	2 2.6%	28 36.4%	29 37.7%	12 15.6%	6 7.8%	2.9
E. Student learning and training plans are monitored jointly by teachers and workplace instructors. (77)	6 7.8%	12 15.6%	30 39.0%	17 22.1%	12 15.6%	3.2
F. School-based coursework explicitly incorporates students' reflections from work experiences. (77)	8 10.4%	28 36.4%	21 27.3%	13 16.9%	7 9.1%	2.8
G. Work-based activity explicitly reinforces academic and technical lessons. (77)	5 6.5%	18 23.4%	29 37.7%	16 20.8%	9 11.7%	3.1
H. Employers, labor representatives, private and public community service providers, parents, and other community members are provided school-to-work orientation and training. (75)	11 14.7%	29 38.7%	20 26.7%	12 16.0%	3 4.0%	2.6
I. Before receiving funds for school-to-work, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in forming active partnerships with employers, unions, and other community organizations? (77)	17 22.1%	33 42.9%	15 19.5%	6 7.8%	6 7.8%	2.4
J. At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in forming active partnerships with employers, unions, and other community organizations? (77)	-- --	13 16.9%	36 46.8%	18 23.4%	10 13.0%	3.3

1 = Not yet considered, 2 = Planning stage, 3 = Early implementation, 4 = Functional, 5 = Institutionalized

6. Active Participation of Educators

This section was composed of six indicators. The results are shown in Table 6. The area rated the highest was "Academic and vocational teachers receive continued training in applied instructional methods." The area rated the lowest was "At least a quarter of all secondary educators have recent business/industry experience through paid work or educator internships." Overall, site administrators indicated a statistically significant growth in this area since being funded. (p.>.001)

Table 6
Active Participation of Educators

n = 79 Districts	1	2	3	4	5	Mean
A. All staff participate in the planning, implementation, and operation of the school-to-work project (including appropriate non-certified staff). (75)	9 12.0%	19 25.3%	24 32.0%	12 16.0%	11 14.7%	3.0
B. Academic and vocational teachers receive continued training in applied instructional methods. (78)	1 1.3%	17 21.8%	26 33.3%	25 32.1%	9 11.5%	3.3
C. Teachers and counselors are provided with professional development and inservice training on how to implement school-to-work. (78)	6 7.7%	17 21.8%	28 35.9%	18 23.1%	9 11.5%	3.1
D. Academic and vocational teachers actively participate in work-based learning connected to the classroom. (78)	3 3.8%	29 37.2%	32 41.0%	9 11.5%	5 6.4%	2.8
E. At least a quarter of all secondary educators have recent business/industry experience through paid work or educator internships. (76)	29 38.2%	33 43.4%	6 7.9%	5 6.6%	3 3.9%	1.9
F. Secondary and postsecondary instructors are actively involved in developing articulated Tech Prep competency-based curriculum. (78)	7 9.0%	18 23.1%	22 28.2%	20 25.6%	11 14.1%	3.1
G. Before receiving funds for school-to-work, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in having educators participate actively in school-to-work activities? (78)	43 55.1%	23 29.5%	8 10.3%	4 5.1%	-- --	1.7
H. At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in having educators participate actively in school-to-work activities? (78)	2 2.6%	26 33.3%	29 37.2%	18 23.1%	3 3.8%	2.9

*1 = Not yet considered, 2 = Planning stage, 3 = Early implementation, 4 = Functional, 5 = Institutionalized

In the second part of the survey administrators were asked to provide estimates of the number of students, schools, and business partners participating in various school-to-work activities. As shown in Table 7, administrators were asked to identify which school-to-work activities have been used in the past 12 months in their district/consortium. They were also asked to estimate the number of schools, students, organizations (companies, unions, etc.), and community members (employers, union members, agency representatives, etc.) involved. The most commonly used school-to-work activities (used in 90 percent or more sites) were: curriculum guidance, guest speakers, student field trips to business, and Running Start. Activities least used (by less than 50 percent) were: apprenticeships, women in trades fair, occupational skills training specific to an employer site, senior projects, and non-traditional job fairs. Guest speakers and career explorations involved the largest number of students.

Table 7
School-to-Work Activities and Extent of Participation

School-to-Work Activity	Used in Your Project		Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Organizations	Number of Community Members
	Yes	No				
A. Career guidance (74)	73 98.6%	1 1.4%	282	125,664	402	6,029
B. Guest speakers (75)	70 93.3%	5 6.7%	428	145,577	1,478	4,774
C. Career exploration (73)	68 93.2%	5 6.8%	319	150,253	1,061	2,924
D. Student field trips to businesses (77)	71 92.2%	6 7.8%	344	42,690	1,356	2,258
E. Running Start (76)	70 92.1%	6 7.9%	148	6,213	224	985
F. Tech Prep (73)	67 91.8%	6 8.2%	186	54,931	229	887
G. Non-paid work experience (73)	65 89.0%	8 11.0%	160	13,748	917	1,839
H. Vocational student organizations (73)	63 86.3%	10 13.7%	154	17,220	323	1,390
I. Cooperative education (71)	61 85.9%	10 14.1%	153	13,864	1,833	2,673
J. Career portfolio (69)	58 84.1%	11 15.9%	139	47,143	203	815
K. Job shadowing (71)	58 81.7%	13 18.3%	123	16,633	2,902	3,765
L. Other (5)	4 80.0%	1 20.0%	7	910	176	27
M. Career path development for each student (68)	54 79.4%	14 20.6%	149	75,917	265	1,385

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School-to-Work Activity	Used in Your Project		Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Organizations	Number of Community Members
	Yes	No				
N. Career fairs (69)	54 78.3%	15 21.7%	225	73,893	1,415	2,111
O. Summer youth employment program (69)	52 75.4%	17 24.6%	128	6,763	919	1,338
P. School-based enterprises (71)	53 74.6%	18 25.4%	106	8,601	563	1,129
Q. Service learning activities (72)	51 70.8%	21 29.2%	113	9,271	736	1,709
R. Tutoring programs (73)	51 69.9%	22 30.1%	147	14,696	237	936
S. Mentorships (68)	44 64.7%	24 35.3%	85	7,579	587	1,324
T. Job placement services (68)	43 63.2%	25 36.8%	84	28,799	951	1,498
U. Internships (67)	42 62.7%	25 37.3%	79	10,911	598	1,386
V. Certification of student competencies established by employers (65)	36 55.4%	29 44.6%	91	24,035	806	1,758
W. Transition plan for each student (64)	34 53.1%	30 46.9%	78	19,701	217	835
X. Senior projects (68)	32 47.1%	36 52.9%	48	7,364	693	2,067
Y. Occupational skills training specific to an employer site (64)	30 46.9%	34 53.1%	75	4,471	714	1,455
Z. Non-traditional job fair (69)	31 44.9%	38 55.1%	156	13,290	355	322
AA. Women in trades fair (66)	26 39.4%	40 60.6%	72	9,694	230	133
BB. Apprenticeship programs (64)	12 18.8%	52 81.3%	43	1,042	31	10

Other: career portfolio, presentations, mock interviews, AmeriCorps, CareerCorps, Conference of Color.

Table 8 compares the growth in level of participation in Washington State in selected school-to-work activities between 1994 -95 and 1996-97.

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Table 8
Comparison in Level of Participation in Selected School-to-Work Activities in Washington between 1994-95 and 1996-97

School-to-Work Activity	Number of Schools		Number of Students		Number of Organizations		Number of Community Members	
	1994-95	1996-97	1994-95	1996-97	1994-95	1996-97	1994-95	1996-97
A. Guest speakers	148	428	27,122	145,577	582	1,478	1,369	4,774
B. Career exploration	111	319	28,554	150,253	465	1,061	832	2,924
C. Career fairs	55	225	13,935	73,893	561	1,415	409	2,111
D. Career guidance	70	282	37,177	125,664	212	402	145	6,029
E. Career portfolio	64	139	20,780	47,143	10	203	85	815
F. Career path development for each student	50	149	19,432	75,917	37	265	46	1,385
G. Certification of student competencies established by employers	20	91	12,365	24,035	244	806	342	1,758
H. Cooperative education	53	153	3,360	13,864	708	1,833	702	2,673
I. Student field trips to businesses	161	344	8,115	42,690	441	1,356	471	2,258
J. Internships	29	79	10,301	10,911	253	598	116	1,386
K. Job placement services	38	84	4,083	28,799	486	951	883	1,498
L. Job shadowing	55	123	17,185	16,633	441	2,902	682	3,765
M. Mentorships	47	85	1,917	7,579	291	587	367	1,324
N. Non-paid work experience	35	160	551	13,748	282	917	296	1,839
O. Occupational skills training specific to an employer site	25	75	473	4,471	295	714	264	1,455
P. Running Start	41	148	696	6,213	91	224	93	985
Q. School-based enterprises	29	106	1,121	8,601	79	563	27	1,129
R. Senior projects	18	48	2,231	7,364	366	693	1,170	2,067
S. Service learning activities	41	113	3,126	9,271	172	736	1,103	1,709
T. Summer youth employment program	45	128	10,589	6,763	131	919	50	1,338
U. Tech Prep	46	186	3,820	54,931	83	229	477	887
V. Transition plan for each student	30	78	15,799	19,701		217	--	835
W. Tutoring programs	78	147	3,535	14,696	53	237	155	936

School-to-Work Activity	Number of Schools		Number of Students		Number of Organizations		Number of Community Members	
	1994-95	1996-97	1994-95	1996-97	1994-95	1996-97	1994-95	1996-97
X. Non-traditional job fair	21	156	17,355	13,290	131	355	315	322
Y. Women in trades fair	19	72	1,834	9,694	107	230	--	133
Z. Vocational student organizations	57	154	3,902	17,220	132	323	358	1,390
AA. Apprenticeship programs	3	43	1,099	1,042	89	31	0	10
BB. Other	--	7	--	910	--	176	--	27

Another look at the data was based on the number of students involved in structured work-based learning experiences that are connected to school learning for each grade level. Table 9 indicates the number per grade level as well as the total number of students in the participating districts. As would be expected, the number of students in structured school-to-work increases with each grade level. Overall 27,792 middle and junior high school students were reported as participating in structured school-to-work, which is 22 percent of the students in those grade levels. The total number participating increases with each grade level. For seniors 32 percent was involved.

Table 9
Students in Structured School-to-Work by Grade Level

Grade Level	Number Involved in Structured School-to-Work	Total Number of Students Enrolled	Percentage in Structured School-to-Work
7	1,289	25,429	0.05
8	2,541	25,259	10.0
9	4,664	27,286	17.0
10	4,919	27,368	18.0
11	6,725	27,503	24.0
12	8,478	26,692	32.0
Total	27,792	127,335	22.0

Because school-to-work is intended for all students, we felt it important to find the number of students in school-to-work experiences by category of student. Although there were numerous categories of students that could have been used, our advisors from the three participating state agencies suggested the categories shown in Table 10. Although most of the categories may be obvious, the middle majority meant students not in advanced classes or special needs students. Thus it overlaps with some of the other categories such as students of color. The percentage of students in school-to-work was at or above the state average (22 percent) for all categories except school drop outs and students of color. Students with disabilities were best represented.

Table 10
Students in School-to-Work by Category

Category	Total Number	Number in School-to-work	Percentage in School-to-work
Students of color	30,854	6,551	21
ESL/non-English speaking	9,760	2,530	26
Academically talented	6,440	2,410	37
Middle majority	63,098	20,507	33
Low achieving	13,922	4,253	31
Students with disabilities	9,922	3,855	39
School dropouts	2,900	395	14

We were also interested in the types of participation districts had received in the past 12 months from business/industry, trade associations, labor, or other community groups. Table 11 indicates the number and percentage of business/community groups participating in each type of assistance. The largest rate of participation (identified by three-quarters or more of the districts) was in: providing speakers for career education days, and providing equipment of materials. Less than a third of the sites reported employers providing awards, scholarships for teachers, or releasing employees to teach classes in school.

Table 11
Participation by Employers and Community Organizations

n = 79 Districts	Total Number of Districts	Percent of Districts
A. Providing speakers for career education days	62	78.5
B. Providing equipment or materials	59	74.7
C. Participating in curriculum development — e.g., determining competencies required for occupations, listing tasks and objectives, and creating lab or other contextual learning activities	53	67.1
D. Providing awards or scholarships for students	52	65.8
E. Assistance in defining program outcomes	48	60.8
F. Supporting staff development activities for counselors and instructors through workplace visits and discussions	46	58.2
G. Providing student internships	41	51.9
H. Assistance in promoting or marketing Tech Prep	40	50.6
I. Providing educator internships	35	44.3
J. Assistance in identifying/redefining occupational clusters/areas	34	43.0
K. Providing space for classes or other activities	29	36.7
L. Releasing employees to teach classes in schools	24	30.4
M. Providing awards or scholarships for teachers	20	25.3
N. Other support	9	11.4

Other support: development of district-wide, school-to-work strategic plan; business partnership; teacher visits to work sites; advisory; participating in learning community projects; job shadowing and mentoring.

Administrators were asked to provide an estimate of the percentage of their project's total expenditures spent on each of various categories during school year 1995-96. Table 12 identifies the average for seven types of expenditures. The highest percentage goes to equipment or materials, and staff development.

Table 12
Percentage of Expenditures Used in School-to-Work for Various Activities

Activities	Mean (Percent)
Equipment or materials	28.78
Staff development activities	26.18
Other	23.98
Curriculum development and review	20.78
Release time for teachers to plan and work together	17.63
General administration of the project	17.35
Marketing/promotion	8.19
Evaluation activities	6.50

Other: student field trips into industry; consortium membership; office supplies, postage, printing, travel, instructional supplies, certificates, and classified salaries and benefits; partnership building; Business Education Compact; transportation; Tech Prep consortium; student activities; Rotary, volunteers, Island Arts Council, Kiwanis; construction of greenhouse; staff expense; hardware to provide software for career information; job shadow/ business partnership program; career counseling center plan; school-to-work center staffing; materials/supplies.

An important part of a successful school-to-work system involves being able to obtain outside funds to supplement state school-to-work funding. In addition to school-to-work funds obtained from the state, school-to-work administrators were asked to indicate other funding sources and amounts received in the past 12 months to help with school-to-work activities. Table 13 identifies the additional sources. The largest source was from "other."

Table 13
Additional Funding Sources Used Across the State

Funding Source	Amount ($)
Vocational	3,052,393
Tech Prep	1,449,289
SLIG	327,143
School-to-work	1,055,400
Goals 2000	158,800
Carl Perkins	1,628,399

Other Funding:

- Student Learning Improvement (30,000)
- Boeing (4,200)
- H.S. Technology (12,000)
- Local Dues (27,000)
- Challenge (Technology) Grant (1.3 million), OSPI (50,000), JTPA (299,933), WA State Youth Empl.(154,094)
- State (100,000), Local (200,000)
- Basic Ed. State (60,000), Private Industry Council (49,000), Special Ed. (3,000)
- Serve & Learn (12,000), Basic Ed. (10,000)
- Resources committed as leverage (503,600)
- Leverage funds for '95-'96 (6,300)
- Title IV Innovative Grant (15,000)
- Special Levy Tech Funds (100,000); Business/Industry (100,000), Legislative Equipment Funds (12,000), JTPA (3,000)
- Local Levy (40,000)
- Counseling State (38,500), Career Day Local (2,200), Business Partner Local (3,500)
- State / Programs and Staff (1.2 Million)
- About 10 different funds (70,935)
- District Funds (15,000), MTAG (12,000)
- MTAG Toolbox Grant (6,000), Boeing Surplus (2,000)
- Boeing (10,000)
- PIC (550,000)
- State Regular (100,000)
- Rural Grant (98,000), Basic Ed. (6,000)
- Title I (10,000), Local Organizations (10,000), Local Bond and Levy (10,000), State Bilingual (8,000)
- Dir. Dist. Matching Funds (28,300), JTPA (12,000), Employment Security Funds (4,000)
- Special Ed. (700)
- Local Levy (100,000)
- Boeing (10,000), Private Industry Council (12,000)
- Youth Employment Grant (25,000), CORD Project (10,000)
- Technology Bond Fund (40,000)
- Levies (37,000), 1209 (45,500), General Fund (88,900), Other Fed. Fund (50,500)

- Boeing (25,290)
- Higher Ed. Coord. Board (5,800)
- Other State (50,000), Other Local (25,000)

Self-Sufficiency Plans

Districts shared their plans for long-term school-to-work funding. The most frequently mentioned funding sources were:

- Use of local district funds (19 districts)
- Vocational education funds (8)
- Grants (5)
- SLIG (5)
- School-based enterprises (4)
- Blending of local, state, and federal funding (3)
- Foundation grants (2)
- State general funds (2)
- Business and community (2)

In addition to identifying funding sources, some districts identified activities or strategies such as:

- Working with consortia to share resources (6)
- Integrating school-to-work within existing curricula (6)
- Finishing curriculum development (4)
- Collaborating with other programs (3)
- Partnering with business and community groups (3)

SITE VISITATION REPORTS

Overview

While written surveys are useful in obtaining judgments of school-to-work coordinators regarding the status of their programs and the number of students and community people involved in various school-to-work activities, they do not provide a rich understanding of what is actually occurring in these communities. Thus, case studies were designed to provide an in-depth view of seven school-to-work sites across the state. Each site visit took two or three days and involved a team of two to eight people led by a NWREL staff person as the team coordinator. Other volunteer members of the study teams included education leaders and representatives from business, labor, and government.

The sites visited were four school districts (Bethel, Methow, Sumner, and Wapato); one consortium, (Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium, Clark County); and two extended-day programs for out-of-school youth (Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center and Career Link Academy, Seattle). These sites were selected to present diversity in size, geographic location, and types of student served. The four school districts selected were also chosen because they have received funding for school-to-work for at least three years, had previously been visited in 1994 by a NWREL-led site review team, and were known to have at least some of the key school-to-work elements in place.

A copy of the composite set of interview questions used in the site visits is shown in Appendix A. Each of the following site reports was written by a NWREL staff member based on input from the total site visitation team. An initial debriefing of key findings was built into the last two hours of the site visit. A draft report was prepared and sent to each team member for review and reaction. After revising each site report, a second draft was sent to local site coordinators for factual review. Based on their reaction, a revised, edited copy was prepared and sent back to each site for final review.

Each site report begins with a brief introduction, followed by a description of the context of the project, program components, program strengths, challenges, and recommendations.

BETHEL SCHOOL DISTRICT

Site Report Author: Roy Kruger

Introduction

A four-member study team composed of Carol Anderson, Linda Cowan, Raymond Harry, Roy Kruger, and Cindy Peters conducted a site visit of the Bethel School District on February 19 and 20, 1997. Following an initial study of Bethel's school-to-work program by a NWREL study team in 1995, the major focus of this site visit was to review any changes that had taken place in the district's school-to-work program in the past two years. The study team received an overview of local reform efforts and school improvement strategies from district personnel before spending time in two high schools, an alternative high school, and at job sites. A list of local individuals who contributed to this study is included at the end of this site report.

Context

Located between Tacoma and Puyallup, the Bethel School District region continues to experience dramatic growth in population, housing, and traffic. The district has two large comprehensive high schools and one alternative learning center serving students in grades nine through 12.

The district's 10-year strategic plan continues to play a central role in the district's educational restructuring. Highlighted in the 1995 report as "the one element that stands out in Bethel's school-to-work transition model," the plan is based on seven organizational planning strategies:

1. Building a climate for change
2. Enabling school-based decisionmaking
3. Providing ongoing staff development for both classroom and professional staff
4. Establishing clear and consistent learner outcomes
5. Utilizing technology to its best advantage
6. Providing instructional support wherever it is needed
7. Assuring quality facilities and operations

The 1997 study team found that this strategic plan continues to be one of most important unifying forces for educational improvement within the district. The planning process prescribed by the plan is an excellent model of top-down, bottom-up, district site-based planning. The district office provides a strong structure for systemic educational transformation, and is committed to providing the needed resources, personnel, and training necessary for effective school improvement, while at the same time encouraging and empowering local staffs to develop and implement specific changes at their own schools. One administrator described the process as "freedom within a structure."

Thinking of educational reform conceptually, within a system framework, the district staff have adopted strategies related to resources, personnel, and training that have proven to be particularly effective in implementing change. The district has combined funds from multiple sources (e.g., School-to-Work Transition, Tech Prep, Student Learning Improvement Grants (SLIG), Goals 2000, etc.) into one resource for supporting educational reform initiatives. By not constraining the use of resources to specific and narrowly-defined programs (School-to-Work Transition, Tech Prep, etc.), the district is able to earmark funds to support the educational reform needs and initiatives of local staffs and students. The district has made a major commitment to providing adequate personnel for effective educational change. Each high school has a work-based learning coordinator who handles approximately 150 placements annually. Each site has a cadre of six staff trainers, with the following responsibilities:

Strategic Planning Trainer: guide staff in data collection, analysis, and interpretation for improved student learning

Community Involvement Trainer: guide staff in building community involvement for improved student learning

Diverse Learning Needs Trainer: guide staff in adapting curriculum, instruction, and performance assessments for all learners

Technology Trainer: guide staff in using technology for improved student learning

Applied Learning Trainer: guide staff in building relevancy for student learnings through home, school, community, and world or work contexts

Assessment Trainer: guide staff in using test results and implementing appropriate assessment of student content and performance assessments

These trainers serve as key links between the district and local personnel. The district has also adopted a policy of inviting individual staff members to participate in educational reform-related training. It does not require attendance at specific functions, but provides resources to support staff participation at training opportunities of their choice.

Program funding. Bethel received approximately $20,000 during 1996 as their apportionment of the funds received by the Pierce County consortium. Since 1993 Bethel has received $129,200 in state school-to-work funds that have been used in conjunction with other funds to develop an integrated, project-based, system of learning to leverage community resources and utilize the latest technology. The Boeing Company and Intel Corporation continue to play major roles in assisting school staff to design and implement programs.

District-level coordination of educational improvement programs such as secondary vocational education, Tech Prep, service-learning and school-to-work transition is under the direction of the executive director of applied learning, who works with district administrators for curriculum, staff development, and evaluation and assessment.

In the past two years, Bethel has been able to extend its integrative model and strengthen its framework by addressing the program challenges that were apparent at the time of the 1995 study. Changes in program components, strengths, and challenges will be examined below.

Program Components

Career pathways. The Bethel District continues its practice of beginning school-to-work activities at the 8th grade level with the administration of an American Guidance Service career assessment inventory, initial career portfolio, and the initial selection of a career pathway. To assist students in selecting a pathway, Bethel has developed a series of pamphlets, one for each pathway, that describe the recommended high school and postsecondary courses recommended for entry into selected careers. The five pathways implemented by Bethel that have been adopted by all of the schools within Pierce County school-to-work consortium are health and human services, business marketing, scientific natural resources, arts communication, and engineering/manufacturing/tech.

In the 9th grade, additional career assessments and self-assessments are made and a career path field trip is arranged for every student. A new program, 9th Grade Transitional Activities, a series of monthly activities and discussion topics, has been developed to assist junior high students in making a successful transition to high school. Topics such as the realities and study skills needed in high school, course planning and career exploration are discussed. High school students make presentations to the junior high students regarding what they need to know about entering high school. Administrators have found this to be a very important program in assisting students to make that crucial transition during the first semester of the sophomore year.

During the career exploration section of the program students are introduced to the WOIS (Washington Occupational Information System), a computer program and accompanying activities book, *The Career Book*. The WOIS program is designed to take students through the basics of career exploration. Career path choices of the class of 2001 are shown in the table below.

Career Path Choices: Class of 2001
Fall 1996

Career Path	Students	%
Health & Human Services	130	23
Business Marketing	92	16
Scientific Natural Resources	76	13
Arts Communication	182	31
Engineering Manufacturing Tech	98	17
Total	338	100

Tenth grade students participate in a careers class where they continue to explore career opportunities and update their portfolios. Students use the book, *Plan for Tomorrow Today* (from WFTECB). Although Bethel and Spanaway high schools utilize different portfolio designs, the focus of the career link coordinators is to prepare students for their 11th and 12th grade work-based learning activities. Each high school has a career link coordinator, and an extensive and comprehensive career center, that serve to link teachers, students, and community resources.

In the 11th grade, students start focusing on work-based learning activities within their career pathway and begin planning for their senior project the next year. Senior projects can involve single or multiple paid work experience, service learning, and other off-campus learning applications. The development of a senior projects portable portfolio is still in the process of being developed (scheduled for pilot testing during 1997-98).

As part of the senior project process, Spanaway is evaluating and prioritizing those things that are critically important for student success in career-related education. The principal noted that although career education has been a graduation requirement (.5 credit), there was no way of analyzing how students were achieving that credit as it was "integrated" into the student's program. Staff decided that career education was important enough to take another look at their present portfolio format and reassess where they are in developing a comprehensive program for all students. The key pieces of the program that they have identified so far include:

- Portfolios
- Eleventh grade careers class
- Communication arts program
- Shift U.S. history to the 10th grade

Career path choices of the district's high school students are shown in the table below.

Career Path Choices: Seniors, Juniors, Sophomores
Winter 1997

Career Path	Seniors	%	Juniors	%	Sophomores	%	Total	%
Health & Human Services	124	37	156	39	152	30	432	35
Business Marketing	41	12	48	12	68	14	157	13
Scientific Natural Resources	26	8	17	4	55	11	98	8
Arts Communication	41	12	49	12	82	16	172	14
Engineering Manufacturing Tech	54	16	59	15	91	18	204	16
Undecided	52	15	73	18	53	11	178	14
Total	338	100	402	100	501	100	1,241	100

Integrated instruction. During the past two years Challenger and Spanaway high schools have continued to strengthen and expand the programs they contracted with the Pierce County Health Department. Students are able to participate in courses and work-based experiences within the health and human services path that assist them in obtaining nursing assistant certification (CAN) or clinical hours towards training in medical/dental related occupations.

The Materials Science and Technology curriculum implemented at Spanaway High School is continuing to expand. This program, developed in cooperation with Battelle Pacific Northwest Laboratory, integrates the study of chemistry, art, writing, special metals, ceramics, polymers, woods, and composites.

One important change since 1995 has been the termination of the Human and Health Service Academy at Bethel High School. This school within a school provided integrated instruction for 70 students (140 students in the two cohort groups, 1994, 1995) in communication arts, careers, physical education, world history, biology, anatomy and physiology, personal relations, psychology, and health. In 1996, Bethel changed from a six-period day to a four-period block schedule, limiting the opportunity for teachers to meet together for planning, and causing scheduling problems with other required courses for graduation.

Tech Prep. Bethel is an active member of PRO-TEC, the Pierce Regional Occupational Technical Educational Consortium. During the past two years PRO-TEC has strengthened and expanded its programs within the region. There were 21 students in the program this year and there are plans to update the MST lab next year. The consortium has a received strong support from The Boeing Company for its MTAG program. This year Boeing is providing PRO-TEC with $5,000 to develop a middle school program and $4,700 to provide summer internships for two postsecondary, two high school, and two middle school teachers. In addition, through a generous gift of equipment from Intel Corporation, PRO-TEC has established a regional science lab that is housed in the science wing of Pierce College.

Through the consortium, Bethel has developed an extensive number of articulation agreements with Tacoma Community College, Pierce College, Clover Park Technical College so that students can earn college credits in (1) accounting, (2) business law, (3) business math, (4) keyboarding/information or word processing, (5) marketing, and (6) microcomputer applications. To improve the portability of credits earned by students, the articulation applications are written on multiple-paged NCR paper. One page goes to the postsecondary institution, one page to the student, and one page is retained in the student's file at school for future reference.

PRO-TEC will be developing a Celebration of Career program in health and human services this spring as a method of promoting this strand to students. Intel has donated computers to the consortium to develop innovative strategies for teaching technology skills in the alternative school settings within the county.

Work-based learning. Students are involved in a variety of work-based learning activities in the district, including traditional paid work experience, cross-age tutoring, internships, job shadowing, and field trips for exposure to different occupations. Paid experiences are related to vocational programs with formal employer agreements. Internships are usually unpaid opportunities designed to provide students with practice in utilizing skills related to what they learn in the classroom.

During the 1996-97 school year approximately 450 students in Spanaway, Bethel, and Challenger high schools participated in work-based learning activities The study team visited several employers in the area who are providing diverse learning opportunities to students, including Interstate Distributor Company and Wendy's.

The Madigan Medical Center at Fort Lewis continues to provide students in the health and human services strand with the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of career opportunities in a state-of-the-art health care facility.

Portfolios. High schools within the district continue to reassess and develop their portfolio programs. Spanaway High School has produced an impressive portfolio that is commercially available to other schools. As mentioned before, Spanaway staff are in the process of reassessing their present portfolio as part of an overall evaluation of their curriculum, assessment, and instructional system. Bethel High School has also taken a careful and reflective approach to developing a portfolio assessment for their students. The study team came away with the opinion that the district is continuing to reflect and innovate on the basis of lessons learned during the past two years.

Connecting Activities

One of the most impressive developments during the past two years in connecting activities has been the implementation of a *Performance Learning Manual* and database. The manual focuses on providing an integrated system for curriculum and assessment development across all schools within the district. Topics covered in the manual include:

- Bethel learner outcomes and attributes
- Philosophy, core essential learnings, rubrics, and curriculum frameworks for technology, communication arts, mathematics, science, social studies, creative arts, healthful living, international languages and cultures, and vocational/applied learning
- Connecting activities for career paths, community resources, and service learning
- Guide to curriculum unit development

The accompanying computer program provides teachers with the appropriate essential learnings and SCANS content and assessment standards that relate to the academic content of the instructional module they are creating. It is hoped that through use of the computer system teachers will begin creating learning modules that other staff members can also use in their classes, and that over time the overall K-12 curriculum will become integrated and seamless throughout the district. Several teachers mentioned that the adoption of the computer program for curriculum development is likely to be a lengthy process because of the time commitment that will be required. Once the use of the computer program becomes the norm across the district, the concern cited by the 1995 study team about developing a school-to-work foundation during the K-7 years will be addressed.

Program Strengths

Systemic approach. Bethel's strategic plan and top-down, bottom-up planning model has effectively created an integrated school improvement system. Student outcomes, curriculum and assessment development, staff development and available resources are tied together in a concerted effort to achieve district-wide school improvement.

Bethel has made a strong commitment to system-wide change, and district staff definitely understand the time and dedication it takes to "move" a system. Their strategic plan is the foundation of their change effort. They have not wavered from it, and continue to assess their progress against the plan. Knowing they won't get 100 percent participation, the district has invited many people to participate in the process, and over the last four years there has been a significant increase in the number of teachers who have "seen the light."

Bethel has done an excellent job of integrating and blending all the school reform efforts (HB1209, Goals 2000, Tech Prep, school-to-work, etc.). The district has avoided a "layering" of programs and, as far as the staff is concerned, it's now "just how we do business here." It has been a K-12 curriculum project from the beginning. The program pieces fit together because they are all integrated into the Performance Learning Manual/curriculum development project, the driving force behind Bethel's reform efforts.

Staff development. Bethel has made a strong commitment to staff development by adequately support their educational reform efforts through far-reaching programs such as providing trainers at each building and promoting two-week optional summer institutes for teachers for concentrated inservice learning. Through supporting staff development, the district has played an instrumental part in getting support staff to work together to ensure the implementation of their school reform efforts.

Implementation tools. The development of the *Performance Learning Manual* and computer program are examples of the effective use of technology to integrate work-based and school-based education across the K-12 curriculum. The adoption of the WOIS system provides junior high and high school students with an effective tool for exploring occupational opportunities.

Strong community connections. Bethel continues to enjoy strong connections with community employers who provide solid workplace learning opportunities.

Program Challenges

The major challenge faced by Bethel is the overwhelming success of its work-based learning program. The number of students participating in the program has almost doubled in the past two years. Although each high school has its own coordinator, the effective monitoring of 150 annual placements annually provides a major challenge for the staff. The district has made an obvious effort to encourage work-based learning opportunities for students, but in the opinion of the study team the popularity of the program has grown beyond the ability of staff to effectively manage it.

This district is to be commended for eliminating the practice of "get a job; get a credit," or students taking early release to go to a job and getting credit for the experience. As a result, more students are choosing to be involved in "organized/monitored" work-based learning opportunities. Students can still find their own job, but it must be within the context of a school-monitored program.

The main challenges expressed by work-based learning coordinators are:

- Time intensive nature of job development with businesses. Finding the right employer/site for each student, and ensuring it is an educational experience and not just a job, takes time.

- Limited work-based learning coordinators. There are not enough coordinators to work with all the students who want/need placements. This is especially an issue at Challenger High School, where placing high risk students with a business is a both a challenge and potential liability risk.

- Transportation for both students and coordinators traveling to job sites. The region is spread out and rural, making it a challenge to find nearby placements. Bus transportation does not exist for most locations, and not all students have access to cars. Coordinators have found themselves driving students to worksites, certainly not a valuable use of their limited time.

- Work-based learning coordinators need to balance their time between providing career education to students in the classroom and trying to get out into the community and work on placements. There are also many "unwritten" expectations of staff to be involved in community functions and events on evenings and weekends that take time away from their personal time.

- Businesses that invest time in students are often let down by students. It takes a lot of time to negotiate the problem, "smooth the waters," and problem solve. Schools cannot afford to burn bridges with business partners, and coordinators often have to "hold the business person's hand" through the process of working with students.

- There are major liability issues related to work-based learning. Insuring safe, appropriate placements for students, and attending to insurance issues related to the transportation to and from sites, are two examples. Others are issues related to the need and cost of conducting background checks on potential worksites. There are also liability concerns on the part of small businesses who take responsibility for the safety of students.

Pierce County schools need to work together to create job development opportunities for students. Working together and building trust between coordinators and with businesses can ease the burden of placement. Currently schools are working each other's territory for job sites and this causes problems for businesses. Some of these problems may be helped with the implementation of the proposed employer database through the chamber of commerce.

Bethel School District List of Persons Interviewed

Marilyn Ash, executive director of applied learning
Whit Baker, carpentry/construction/MST teacher
Harriott Balmer, Evergreen Services and Seminars
Jan Barone, director, PRO-TEC
Carol Buchholz, teacher
Shelly Calligan, work-based learning coordinator
Barbara Clausen, executive director for assessment
Sharonda Davidson, Private Industry Council
Lani Dalich, personnel, manager, Interstate Distributing
Chrissy Faubion, student
Karen Hanson, teacher
Craig Hill, parent
Cindy Hoover, work-based learning coordinator
Lilyian Howard, health occupations student
Jeff Hunt, assistant principal
Jill Jacoby, advisory member
Terrace McClure, teacher
Summer McVickers, student
Brenda McQuade, manager, Wendy's
Todd Mitchell, student
Gary Nicholson, athletic trainer, Pacific Lutheran University
Suzanne Payne, Career Link coordinator
Nathan Phillips, student, Boeing intern
Terry Pullen, teacher
Jeff Rayburn, advisory member
Laurie Richards, teacher
Nichole Schuder, student, business education
Tim Sherry, principal
Cindy Sorenson, teacher, marketing/Internet/business
Alen Tiff, teacher, student store/accounting/business
Johanna Tudor, student, Boeing Credit Union intern
Chet Wade, student, Boeing intern
Becky Wahl, transition specialist
DeAnn Wood, health occupations teacher
Tamie Wright, early childhood education teacher
Ande Zurfluh, work-based learning coordinator

Study Team for Bethel School District

Roy Kruger, NWREL
Carol Anderson, NWREL Consultant
Linda Cowan, Tech Prep director, County Tech Prep Consortium, Whatcom Community College
Raymond Harry, Tech Prep director, State Board of Community & Technical Colleges
Cindy Peters, work-based learning coordinator, Richland High School

CAREER LINK ACADEMY

Site Report Author: Keisha Edwards

Introduction

A six-member study team conducted a site visit to the Career Link Academy in Seattle, Washington, on January 28 and 29, 1997. Represented on the team were individuals from education, industry, social service, and labor. Site visit activities included a program orientation by the Career Academy director and job developer; a student focus group meeting; interviews with the work-based learning coordinator, teachers, and administrators; classroom visits; and visits to worksites that provide job shadows and student internships. A list of persons interviewed is included at the end of this site report.

Context

The Career Link Academy (CLA) is an extended day program serving young people who are typically labeled "high risk," with no diploma or appreciable job skills. Begun in 1994, the Academy is sponsored by the South Seattle Community College, the Highline School District and the Sea-Tac Occupational Skills Center. Serving over 40 high schools in the Seattle area, CLA offers students the opportunity to gain a GED while simultaneously receiving job training.

The South Seattle Community College campus serves two other high school programs, Running Start and Tech Prep. Of the 7000 students on the campus, with an average age of 34, 500 are high school-age students. The college has a 60/40 vocational/academic split.

The mission of CLA is to provide a program that integrates competency-based vocational skills development to assist young people in the transition from school to work. CLA also endeavors to supply employers with students who are knowledgeable, skilled, and willing to work in entry-level positions.

On entering CLA, students receive a comprehensive assessment of personal needs. A series of performance and interest predictors assist staff in the development of an attainable career goals strategy for each student. Vocational training is then matched and offered to the student. Areas of vocational training offered at CLA include computer technology/business, culinary arts, automotive technology, cosmetology, and welding fabrication.

Students in CLA are encouraged to gain the experiences necessary to become job-ready. Interview skills, resumes, and course-related work experiences are an integral part of the program. Once the initial portion of the program is complete, students are eligible for advanced training and/or full-time employment placement.

Thirty youth were enrolled in CLA the first academic year, 1994-95. In 1996-97, 134 students are enrolled. Seventy nine are male, 55 are female. The average age is 18 years. Ethnic groups represented are: Asian 10 percent, African America 49 percent, American Indian 2 percent, Hispanic 1 percent, Caucasian 25 percent, and other 11 percent.

The courses offered in 1996-97, with the number of students in each, are: cosmetology (5), work-based learning (13), business (28), welding (22), pre-voc/GED (48), diesel, short course (12), diesel, regúlar (2), supervision and management (2), auto (1), and carpentry (1).

Most CLA students come from west Seattle and the Seattle/Rainier Valley areas. Typically, family income ranges from below poverty line to middle-income. The majority of students have an average of two year's secondary school experience.

Program Components

Classroom instruction. Structured classroom observations were conducted by site review team members in five CLA classrooms: GED prep, diesel preventative maintenance, auto detailing, business computing, and career association. Each classroom had a very different focus, and therefore different outcomes were observed in each.

- The GED prep class was a self-paced computer lab that utilized a competency-based software program to teach basic skills. Due to the format of the class there was little opportunity to observe students in team situations. The instructor did say, however, that on occasion students participate in team-related activities. Students were encouraged to ask questions related to the skill set they were working on, but because it was a computer program students were actively involved in choosing their own activities and assessing their own work.

- The business computing class did not appear to have a particular instructional format, but was focused on individual student work. We observed that the instructor provided opportunities for students to use their preferred learning styles, and saw students teaching and learning from one another.

- The diesel preventative maintenance and auto detailing classrooms were similar. Each was competency-based and self-paced, and the instructors provided a lecture and demonstration before students began work on their own. During the classroom visits, most students were focused on their assignments and very involved. The hands-on lessons and use of industry-specific tools and materials provided students with an authentic taste of the world of work. One site-review team member observed, *"The students take initiative, work independently, and also seek advice and clarification when uncertain. They appear to be very comfortable with the student-teacher relationship."*

- A student in the same class said, "I'm glad to be in the program. I would even consider continuing my education after I'm done. Before, I wouldn't even have thought about college."

- The career association class was conducted as a seminar, and all aspects of "career consciousness" were explored. There were extensive opportunities for students to share and evaluate information, ask and respond to questions, and reflect on what they had learned in previous sessions. The teacher-facilitators made frequent connections between this classroom and the world of work.

The students. A student focus group, consisting of nine students and two site-team members, was an equal mix of males and females. Participants ranged in age from 16 to 21. Two of the participants stated they were longer-term CLA students (one, three years; another, two quarters). The remainder of the participants had been involved in Career Academy between three days and four weeks. All of the students were enthusiastic to share their views on the program and had no hesitation in expressing themselves. Topics discussed ranged from how teachers at the Academy motivate students, to the major strengths and weaknesses of the program. Several themes clearly emerged and can be best expressed in the words of individual students:

> *About Career Link Academy: "This program has opened a lot of doors . . . the teachers here have really helped us to understand we have choices. We learn as long as you really want something, you can have it."*
>
> *"As soon as I got here I felt so comfortable. Most of the students have a more mature attitude and the teachers pay attention to you. It's kinda cool . . . you walk around the campus with college students. It's more real."*
>
> *"Everyone motivates us to work . . . to strive for the best."*

About internships: "At my internship I learned: listen to your boss, teamwork is important, and you got to work to get paid. The employer is teaching you how to grow up and handle your business."

About connections: "Here we do a lot of talking about goal setting and work, but the teachers know we have a life too. I have two kids and another one on the way, and if one of my babies gets sick, I know I can call in without the program sweating me. That the teachers know that our life outside of school is just as important as our schoolwork really makes a difference."

Work-based learning. The work-based learning classroom is open to students on a "drop in" basis. Here students can work one-on-one with the work-based learning coordinator to investigate their career goals, do a resume and cover letter, and work on job-readiness skills. Community-based learning activities offered to students include job shadows and internships. To access these placements, students take an ACID entrance test to determine their level of capability, and further testing may be done to facilitate an appropriate placement. Students are also required to complete and maintain a current training and job plan to help ensure their success.

Short-term technical training. Career Link Academy currently offers short-term technical training in the following areas: business computing, diesel preventative maintenance, and auto detailing. They hope to offer a pastry and specialty baking program soon. All short-term technical training classes are competency-based and self paced. Most students can complete each of the programs in one to two quarters.

Employment. While one of the primary objectives of Career Link Academy is to obtain meaningful employment for the youth involved in the program, the job advisor also stresses that, *"We're not just employment security; we're much more than that. We focus on broad-based skill training: how to get a job, how to keep a job . . . everything about the world of work."*

Thirty-two percent of CLA students have regular jobs or are involved in paid and unpaid internships while in the program. The youth are offered an array of services and classes that support their employment placement, from skill assessment and worksite visits to having access to an on-staff job advisor.

Program Strengths

- Career Link Academy staff are supportive, flexible, motivating, and understanding of students. This sentiment was continually voiced by the student focus group, business community, and technical training teachers. This motivation and support is reflected in the students' "I can!" attitude.

- Classes are competency-based, which allows students to move forward at their own pace. The students felt this was a more "open" and safe learning environment.

- CLA has an open entry/open exit policy. This better allows students to balance the demands of family and/or work with GED prep or technical training.

- The career association class provides students with practical and timely information about the world of work. It also provides students with an opportunity to share workplace information with one another as well as do team-building activities.

- Strong connections with the business community help facilitate successful training-to-work placements for current students and program graduates.

Program Concerns

- There is a need for a wider variety of technical training programs. CLA currently offers short-term technical training in the areas of diesel preventative maintenance, auto detail, and business technology. Both students and staff expressed an interest in, and a need for, broader course offerings. Lack of funds is the primary reason for not expanding the current program.

- Some of the students are not as "engaged" as others and may be a distraction to students who want to fully participate. In each of the classrooms visited there were a few students who seemed removed from the classroom activities. These students tried to engage other students in activities not related to the materials being covered. When the students in the focus group were asked for ways to improve CLA, there were few criticisms. But most agreed that, *"If those students who don't really want to be here — the ones who only want to take advantage of the program — they should get out."*

- Some program components are not well integrated. Many of the technical classroom teachers were not aware of the different structural components of CLA. These teachers did not know the CLA "process" by which students came to them; they only knew these students appeared on their rosters. Most of the students in the focus group were confused about the different CLA components and didn't know how to access the different components or services offered. (This may be due to the fact that most of the CLA students interviewed were newer to the program.) All three employers interviewed said it would be beneficial to have more frequent communication with CLA staff.

- The job shadows and internships are limited in structure. In the student focus group, not all students knew the process to get into a CLA job shadow or internship. Two students who were about to participate in an internship did not fully know what was expected of them when they went to their internship site. All students who had or were about to participate in job shadows or internships (4) said they knew of no formal structure to their on-site learning; there were no specific "homework" assignments nor specific length of time they were to be at the site. One student commented that during her day-long job shadow she took a notebook and was to observe her host, but she really did not know what to look for or record. Two out of the three business partners interviewed stated more structure to the job shadows would improve the experience for both the student and the business.

Program Recommendations

- More integration between program components (orientation, basic skills training, technical training, work-based learning, and employment).

- More continuing education for CLA staff. The staff suggested: JAG program training, behavior management, and staff retreats to develop program and curriculum.

- More structure to the work-based learning component of the program; for example defining each component of work-based learning so there is a "common" language for all parties involved.

Career Link Academy List of Persons Interviewed

Marie Coon, CLA Director
Allen Stowers, Youth Job Advisor
Catherine Barashkoff, Work-Based Learning Instructor
Rob Koenig, Diesel Preventive Maintenance Instructor
Cindy Wilson, Business Technology Instructor
Steve Ford, Auto Detail Instructor
Joe Bowman, GED Prep Instructor

Nine students at Career Link Academy
Business Community members who work with CLA students:
Willie Williams, All State Insurance
Robin Murray, Alaska Copper
Daniel Keene, Market Salon

Study Team for Career Link Academy

Keisha Edwards, NWREL
Trinia Burns, Human Resources, GM Nameplate
Janet Chappell, Educational Manager, Fluke Corporation
Melina Morgan, United Steelworkers
Lars Nowack, Special Needs Liaison, Renton Career Development Center

COLUMBIA RIVER SCHOOL-TO-WORK CONSORTIUM (CLARK COUNTY)

Site Report Author: Changhua Wang

Introduction

An eight-member study team conducted a site visit to the Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium on January 15-16, 1997. Team members included four educators from Oregon, one business representative from Washington, and three research associates from the Northwest Regional Education Laboratory. The team visited Fort Vancouver High School, Battle Ground High School, Woodland High School, Camas High School, Clark County Vocational Skills Center, and the State School for the Deaf. The team members interviewed students, teachers, counselors, administrators, and business representatives. One person on the team also attended the employability portfolio meeting on January 15, 1997.

Context

The Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium (hereafter referred to as the Consortium) is comprised of eight Clark County school districts (Vancouver, Evergreen, Battle Ground, Camas, La Center, Ridgefield, Washougal, and Woodland), the Clark County Skills Center, two state schools (School for the Deaf and School for the Blind), Clark College, Washington State University, Partnerships in Education (PIE), Private Industry Council (PIC), and the Columbia River Education and Workforce Council (CREWC).

Before the current school-to-work efforts began three years ago, Clark County students were caught in a "whirlpool" of loosely connected systems operating separately with minimal articulation and coordination. When the initial federal moneys for school-to-work programs became available in 1993, only three districts and the skills center were involved. But as programs got underway and momentum increased, school-to-work efforts have expanded into other districts and educational arenas, resulting in the present strategic planning that folds together the many previously separate entities. With the involvement of all the county school districts, the two state schools for the deaf and the blind, the public and private postsecondary institutions, and the community agencies, the focus is now on ALL students. Additionally, as Clark County educational groups and businesses become part of the Consortium in southwest Washington, and reach across the Columbia River into Oregon, capacity, momentum, leveraging, and achievement have all increased dramatically.

"To understand the importance of work and how performance, effort and decisions directly affect career and educational opportunities" is the application of Washington State's Essential Academic Learning Requirements to a student's life role as a worker, learner, citizen and family member. Washington State's school-to-work goals initiated the local Consortium's goals. As money flows out to school districts through various grants, the state learning improvement grant spending is designated in the site-based decision-making process. This process involves balanced representation from the business and parental community, and tends to focus on the curriculum, most specifically the application of the essential learning required for all students.

Education reform movements are and will continue to be affected by other reform efforts. Clearly, the probable transition to workforce block grants will impact local school-to-work efforts. The Consortium is also analyzing the impact that welfare reform will have on the local labor market and educational system. Consortium members have no desire to see young people pitted against adults transitioning from welfare in the race for scarce education and job opportunities.

Over 50 percent of grades 9-12 students in the Consortium area are identified as (1) economically or academically disadvantaged, (2) teen parents, (3) students with disabilities, and (4) students with limited English language proficiency. The Clark County Refugee Planning Committee estimates the current refugee population in the county at over 10,000, and refugees and immigrants continue to arrive from various countries, particularly the former Soviet Union.

The Consortium is an active partner with the Columbia River Education and Workforce Council (CREWC), an independent, nonprofit organization that evolved out of an education task force of the Columbia River Economic Development Council. CREWC's purpose is to assist school systems in transforming themselves into high-performance organizations whereby all students meet or exceed the rigorous academic standards now being developed by Washington State's Commission on Student Learning, and to support and participate in the development of a world-class workforce. CREWC is a leader in Clark County in broadening partnership participation by educational institutions, as well as business, labor, community, and parent groups.

In developing a fully functional, regional, school-to-work structure, the Consortium has reached out to new partners in Clark County such as Taiwan Semiconductor, while continuing to work with established businesses such as Hewlett-Packard and Wendel Dental, and maintaining community partnerships with the Youth Initiative and YWCA. The Consortium and Clark College have also merged efforts, including Tech Prep projects. Workforce evaluations by the Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board are being supported with local studies. Through public forums and individual contacts, new partners continue to be involved with the planning process.

Program Components

To ensure that every student and educator is affected by the school-to-work system, the Consortium has established six goals:

- Strategic planning and policy development for systemic change
- Integration of academic and work readiness
- Development and implementation of K-to-life career guidance system
- Expansion of work-based learning opportunities

- Expansion of apprenticeship programs
- Expansion of "Educators in the Workplace"

In addition to maintaining these six goals, the Consortium plans to expand its program in three ways:

1. Include increased numbers of middle and elementary school students, teachers, and administrators, and special and underserved populations. Current Consortium efforts have been successful at the secondary and postsecondary levels. The next step is to purposely extend these strategies to the elementary, special, and underserved populations through community outreach activities. This will be accomplished through staff development opportunities with administrative, business, and community involvement.

2. Develop a system that facilitates the sustainability of the goals without the assistance of school-to-work funds through long-range planning, leveraging, and staff development. Once the strategic system is in place, the Consortium will continue to work to capitalize on existing momentum to leverage human, technological, and monetary resources.

3. Intensify and broaden the impact of each goal. The Consortium will continue to seek new educational and business partnerships and to increase involvement of parents in its process. Additionally, as the initial goals become infused in the curriculum, they will become a condition of graduation.

State and federal school-to-work implementation moneys received late in the spring of 1996 were used to achieve the immediate goals and activities of the Consortium plan. Within a short timeline, the Consortium worked to accomplish as many activities as possible as the school year was winding down, and in four short months the groundwork was laid for activities to address the goals in the 1996-97 school year.

Presently, the following school-to-work efforts are in place or being developed within the eight consortium school districts and other educational and community partners:

- Career pathways supported by all elementary, middle school, secondary, and postsecondary instructors

- School-based learning, work-based learning, and connecting activities

- A business-developed portfolio, in coordination with school entities and career paths, that includes a certificate of mastery, skill standards, and competencies

- Non-traditional apprenticeships and traditional pre-apprenticeships that are registered with the Department of Labor and Industries

- An Internet connection among businesses, education, and the community

- Staff development, in partnership with other Consortium entities, for elementary, secondary, and postsecondary educators designed to help implement school-to work activities, (e.g., training in integration, partnership development, comprehensive career guidance, and elementary implementation strategies)
- Forums for business sectors and the community at large
- An infrastructure of technology for school personnel to communicate with the business sector and the community

Clark County educators have been working together with business, labor, government, and the community for many years. The work of the Consortium will continue these strong partnerships to ensure a coordinated school-to-work transition for *all* students in Clark County.

School-based Learning. Curriculum integration training was provided to 16 teams of five educators each, representing high schools in the Consortium. Trainer Kathy Harris focused the teams on the process of integrating academic and vocational programs and their instructional objectives. These teams returned to their respective schools to implement what they had learned.

Work-based Learning. School-to-work coordinators have been hired in school districts to facilitate student placements in the workplace, job shadows, mentorships, internships, and employment opportunities. A policy handbook of program guidelines, forms and legal requirements has been established and adopted for Clark County (presented as part of 1996 school-to-work grant proposal). Apprenticeship opportunities for students have been implemented and are in the process of being registered with the Department of Labor, and teacher internships in the local business community are offered individually during the summer and as teams during the school year.

Non-traditional. employment opportunities for special population support include the Peer Mentor Program, Teen Parent, Welfare/Disadvantaged and the Private Industry Council Summer Youth Program.

Student internships. A focus group of students from several area high schools reported on their work-based experiences. All the students expressed the value and need for work-based learning. The Veterans' Administration program sponsored by the Vancouver School District provides internships for several students, and those interviewed reported their experiences at the VA hospital as formative. All had realigned their career goals after working at the VA Hospital.

Job shadowing. Most schools offer one-day job shadowing experiences that are arranged at the students' request, and students in the focus group mentioned a superior court and hospital experience. Although those who had done job shadows felt they had learned a lot about "the real world," students said they did not report back in any formalized way, since shadowing wasn't part of their classes. Students also did not usually share their job shadow experience with their classmates.

Extracurricular activities. Through FFA or DECA clubs, students reported they had gained exposure to professionals and real-work job situations such as livestock competitions and student entrepreneurial ventures. Student club experiences also taught them how to work with many people to achieve single goals.

Work experience (paid job experience). Students cited the VA internship, paid work experiences, and extracurricular activities as being most helpful. Those students whose teachers had integrated goals/career planning into the curriculum have been impressed by these experiences (vocational class field trip, opportunities to share with other students).

As far as exploring career pathways or adjusting one's program to prepare for a particular career, however, some opportunities exist but are largely dependent on the students' initiative. Many had sought advice from sources other than those designed as school-to-work resources. Students cited the help they received from non-school professionals such as the manager at work, parents, or school guidance counselors to provide career advice.

Career Guidance and Career Development. Career guidance and career development vary among the Consortium schools. In our opinion, activities in this regard have not been well integrated into classes which are deemed to be relevant to students' career choice. The two examples cited below can be best described as "opportunity" for students to explore their future careers.

Freshman Success program at Woodland High School. The Freshman Success class takes place during a two-hour period. Students work independently in the library/skills center, and keep a folder of their activities. In this mini-portfolio, the students keep their career pathway explorations reports, community service experiences, resumes, letters, and examples of relevant work.

Students begin the course by completing WOIS and COIN interactive computer evaluations. They are required to investigate their career of choice, including reporting on the "reality check," a close look at the education/training required for each career.

A new addition to the Freshman Success program is the community service day, Make A Difference Day. This year, students went out in a group to complete renovations at a park. The teacher sees the community service day as a chance to enhance job-related skills such as communication and civil responsibility. There are opportunities, for example, to coordinate the efforts with city parks and human service organizations. Since the program is new, community service has yet to be integrated into the Freshman Success curriculum, and so the program is at present more of an outing.

The Freshman Success program provides students with an active learning experience. Students work in small groups and with the interactive computer program. The portfolio process allows both teacher and student to assess each student's progress and make adjustments where needed. We saw some frustration with the computerized program, and also noticed that students sought out the advice of the counseling secretary rather than the teacher or career center counselor. Both cases point to the need for flexibility in programming and the availability of individual help so that students are not routed into a study program that is limiting or inappropriate to their career pathway.

Career counseling at Battle Ground High School. At Battle Ground High School we visited a sophomore-level career counseling class where students were selecting occupations from the Consortium career paths based on the Holland Career Guidance model, and identifying skills and education required for particular jobs. The counselor explained to us that this is part of a four-year series of workshop/seminar-style sessions for students. This particular group was in the second day of the four-day session, and most of the activities were geared toward developing career awareness so that students could begin to articulate their school program requirements with possible career options.

Although the class was scheduled during English, the counselor indicated that no team planning was involved to connect the career seminar to the English class. The English teacher requires every student to write a three-page paper about a career they have researched during the counseling session. This is shared with an audience of parents and career counselors.

Students gave varied responses to the question of what they were doing and why. Most did know the class was meant to help them with ideas for possible career choices, and they were familiar with the terms career pathways and school-to-work. Several students were focused on the assignment while others were disinterested, although it appeared that all completed at least the minimum work required to complete a worksheet stating the occupation of interest, reasons for the choice, skills and education required, and long-term outlook for that specific job.

The counselors seem committed to the school-to-work idea but they are concerned about having to filter a large population of students through career counseling each year. They did maintain that the program was getting to students earlier than in previous years, and that seemed to have a positive effect on students, especially juniors. Perhaps if more connections could be made between the regular school program and the program offered in counseling and guidance, the short exposure time might be less of a problem. Five 8th graders are being exposed to the school-to-work concept through various integrated instructional goals and objectives. Counselors agree that in years to come, this will continue to help all high school efforts in their area.

An obvious drawback was that although the teachers are approachable, the class size prevents one-on-one interaction with all students. A greater drawback is apparent with regard to curriculum integration. According to the career center guides, no structure exists whereby teachers of various disciplines can integrate their curriculum or make use of the career study center to enhance their own knowledge of current trends in the work world.

Some teachers voluntarily integrate career and life skills (e.g., at Battle Ground High School all sophomore English classes have a school-to-work focus), but as career center staff reported, these tie-ins are presently optional.

Program promotion. The Consortium sponsored a day-long business/education/labor forum, Partnering to Build a Learning Community, at the Red Lion Inn in September 1996, with the purpose of bringing the pieces of the community together to share existing partnerships, build and strengthen partnerships, and facilitate a better understanding of school-to-work and service learning. Workshops included Involving Families in Elementary Students' Education, Service Learning from the Student's Perspective, Adult Career Transition, and Educators in the Workplace.

CREWC and the Consortium have produced various written materials that do an excellent job of explaining their missions and illustrating their roles as catalysts between education, business, and community. One brightly-colored flyer, entitled *School to Work: Preparing Today's Students for Tomorrow's Workforce*, and intended for the general public, clearly explains the school-to-work concept and invites business and industry partners to get involved. The last page lists the names and phone numbers of the Consortium groups.

CREWC produces a quarterly newsletter, *News about Businesses, Schools, and Progress*, that highlights recent and future work of CREWC, business and education partnerships, and general information about school-to-work. It is distributed to over 1,400 educators, businesses, and community members.

CREWC plans a positive media campaign in 1996-97 with local newspapers, television, and radio stations to promote school-to-work, business partnerships, CREWC, workforce council work, and information on reform legislation.

The first annual BEST* of Class Event, held at the Red Lion Inn in March 1997, recognized and celebrated model classroom projects and educational practices that prepare students for successful careers. Students, teachers, principals and business persons were invited to submit projects in one of three categories: school-based projects, work-based projects, and connecting activities. Elementary, secondary, and higher education institutions were all eligible to participate.

The CREWC Web page on the Partnerships in Education (PIE) Network will be expanded to include BEST* practices, school or business programs, or projects that are models for success related to CREWC competencies and goals.

Staff development. Every year the Consortium sends staff members to the NWREL-sponsored School-to-Work/Tech Prep conference in April, as well as the Work Now and in the Future conference in November. The Consortium also has its own staff development program.

Educators in the Workplace, a partnership program funded by the Consortium and business, labor, and the community, provides all educators in the Consortium school districts a path for professional growth and development. By working one to three weeks in a local business or community agency, teachers have the opportunity to learn current practices and useful applications of the subjects and skills they teach. Educators negotiate their own work schedule during June, July, or August and can receive up to 39 clock hours. Some examples: a guidance counselor at Evergreen High School did an internship at Southwest Washington Medical Center to learn about various jobs in the health profession; a special education teacher at Camas High School worked at Vantech Enterprises with adults with disabilities; a 5-6 grade teacher at Sifton Elementary School worked at Eagle Capital Corporation, a computer brokerage, for five days; a science teacher at Battle Ground High School interned at the Water Education Resource Center to become familiar with new technology in the labs.

Everyone wins with Educators in the Workplace. Employers benefit by gaining access to educators' skills and expertise for project assistance. Teachers benefit from their "hands-on" learning experience, and return to their schools with a better perspective of the working world and with new ideas to enhance student learning. School districts gain professional staff who apply practical experience and skills to enrich the education of students, and students benefit from their interaction with teachers who bring current and relevant activities and information into the classroom. One teacher said, "The program validated my teaching methods and helped me teach relevant, up-to-date lessons."

Partnership with business. Business involvement is an integral part of the school-to-work system that is still evolving in this region.

CREWC is developing a county-wide, employability portfolio that will be a collection of information documenting a student's leadership, organizational and academic skills, and his/her experiences that apply to the work world. The prototype portfolio, now under review by education, community, and business partners, contain five specific parts: (1) the Certificate of Mastery, (2) a resume and list of references, (3) WorkKeys or a similar assessment developed by businesses to help determine the degree of competency match between the potential employee and a career field, (4) a tangible product or project that includes a performance-based demonstration of a student's leadership, organization and work-readiness skills, and (5) the student's high school diploma.

The development of this portfolio project grew out of the expressed need by local employers to have a more relevant tool than a high school transcript to assess students' experience and skills that apply to work. Employers also desire a product that is consistent across schools and districts.

The CREWC employability portfolio committee has met bi-weekly since May of 1996 to prepare the prototype. The product will be piloted by students in school programs during the summer and in several high schools beginning next fall.

Hewlett-Packard, a leading business partner of the Consortium, has designed their school-to-work education effort in response to a perceived need. In 1992, when the company opened 600 positions for employees with 8th grade math and 6th grade reading skills, they found only 51 percent of the applicants were able to meet those criteria. In 1994, when the company upgraded the requirements to 11th grade math, they created an education unit and recruited an educator to serve as liaison.

Hewlett-Packard's education agenda includes the following components:

- Volunteer opportunities: company personnel are paid comp time to volunteer in schools.
- Philanthropy and grants: the company awards grants to K-12 programs in math/science, women and minorities in the sciences, readiness to learn, and parent involvement. These grants are designed to recognize and promote excellence in the above areas.
- Special projects: development of training in management, job floor, and problem simulations are packaged for dissemination to institutions, including schools.
- Partnerships: Hewlett-Packard has partnered with the ESD by aiding in grant writing, providing professional development, providing salary for the district science coordinator, and collaborating with city parks and school districts for field trips and hands-on learning.

Doug Sessions, the Hewlett-Packard education liaison who has experience as a teacher and school administrator, says his vision of job readiness emphasizes complex, interpersonal problem solving, and other "high level" competencies. This emphasis allows Hewlett-Packard to circumvent the common industry problem of over emphasizing industry-specific skills in vocational training-type projects to the detriment of well-rounded academic training. With the help of its education liaison, Hewlett-Packard has been able to marry the two agendas of industry productivity and the academic development of the individual. This compatibility of goals is enhanced by Hewlett-Packard's broad interpretation of industry standards. As Doug Sessions put it, "It is more important that students learn scientific methods than a particular job skill."

Special populations. The Consortium has been trying very hard to include all students in the school-to-work system. The special populations they are serving consist of at-risk students as well as gifted and talented students. With two states schools, one for the deaf and one for the blind, located within the geographic boundary of the Clark County, the Consortium has taken the challenge of including students with severe physical disabilities in school-to-work efforts. The following lists specific efforts aimed at special populations.

- **Ethnic and language minority students** are assigned tutors/job coaches to bridge the cultural and language barriers at work-based learning sites. Included in the language minority population is a large group of deaf students from throughout the state. The Private Industry Council's refugee youth employment project provides consultation and cross-cultural training to local school districts to assist in retaining refugee youth in school. A special refugee summer youth employment program, job training, and job placement for out-of-school refugee youth are also included in this project.

- **Academically talented students** participate in advanced work-based programs including specialized vocational training at the Skills Center, which is no longer viewed a place where watered-down vocational programs are offered to "vocational students." While the Center continues to serve at-risk students, academically talented students are also offered programs, with a higher level of application skills connected with their academic studies. Academically talented students also have the privilege of participating the Running Start program, through which they are able to earn college academic credits while still in high school.

- **Rural students** are of special concern as the Consortium covers some of Clark County's most isolated school districts. The lack of transportation, and the paucity of local business partners in rural areas, is now addressed by the local PIE network, using electronic technology to connect rural schools to a wider range of opportunities. Businesses are beginning to adopt schools in rural areas such as Battle Ground, La Center, Ridgefield, Woodland, Camas, and Washougal. Older students are transported to the Skills Center for training not available in their home district.

- **Low-achieving students** especially benefit from work-based learning opportunities that increase their awareness of how the world of work relates to what they are learning in school. Low-achieving students are supported by program components such as the career focus internships, mentoring by positive role models, the Skills Center, Chapter I skill development programs, tutoring, the Homework Hotline, after-school programs, and JTPA year-round and summer youth activities.

- **Students with disabilities** are provided individualized career and transition plans based on career aptitudes and interests. Work-based learning opportunities supported by the business community will continue to expand. In addition to a multitude of small businesses, the largest business partners providing opportunities for students with disabilities include Red Lion, Fred Meyer, McDonald's, Hewlett-Packard and SEH America. Staff at the State School for the Deaf told us that being part of the Consortium has given them important access to various resources they did not have before for preparing their students for work. The mini-grants they received from the Consortium enabled them to connect some of their students with workplaces. Being part of the Consortium has also increased the local awareness of students with disabilities in the region, and more and more businesses are open to providing various work experiences for students with disabilities.

- **Drop-outs and expelled students** are served by the Consortium through re-entry programs that couple school-based learning with work-based learning. The four alternative schools within the Consortium help reduce the number of dropouts, as do the teen parent programs that focus on case management and child care services. The alternative schools and teen parent programs also provide special assistance to dropouts re-entering school programs. A special program at ESD 112 provides dropouts with career guidance coupled with academic learning, as does the re-entry program for students expelled from their home schools for weapons violations. The Skills Center provides specialized training for students in their dropout retrieval program.

Non-traditional career opportunities for all students are supported by the Consortium. Special mentoring provided by Women in Action, the Clark College Science and Math Career Fair for high school girls, and the Private Industry Council's nontraditional employment thrust all encourage female students to explore non-traditional careers. The Skills Center will continue to team its traditionally male with traditionally female programs to encourage enrollment in non-traditional training. Vocational advisory committees will consciously recruit a broader mix of representation, including ethnic, language, disability and gender groups. Job coaching and mentoring by successful role models will encourage females, as well as ethnic, language, minority, and disability group members, to enter careers where they are traditionally under-represented.

Connecting Activities. Connecting activities take place in many forms and are initiated by different agencies in the region. Listed below are major connecting events or programs of the Consortium:

- CREWC continues to show progress on sponsored strategic planning events, variety of school-to-work projects, and the portfolio (credential/competency) project
- Tech Prep articulation agreements
- Exploring new options (Non-Traditional Options Fair)
- Technical-Professional Career Day
- Partners in Education business/education/labor forum, "Partnering to Build a Learning Community"
- Partners in Education (PIE) network Web site to coordinate student school-to-work opportunities
- YWCA cultural diversity task force
- Cultural and gender issues have been addressed in various formats including advisory committee meetings, at the business/education/labor forum, and through sex equity grants
- Use of "Common Procedures and Forms" handbook for work-based learning through the Consortium
- Miss America School-to-Work in Action Day, "Building an Educational Community Together"

- The *Columbian* newspaper marketing strategy
- Diversity training at the workplace and in the schools (i.e. G.A.P. theater production)
- PAVTEC marketing for school-to-work/Tech Prep for Portland/Vancouver Metropolitan area, including theater displays of an advertisement for all students through the "Sample Your Future" campaign
- Consortium-wide career pathways and career guidance program
- Development of a county-wide portfolio addressing a certificate of mastery, skill standards for employability, and Washington State Essential Academic Learning Requirements

Program Strengths

Although we covered a lot of ground during the two-day visit, the views presented above reflect only what we observed, heard, and read, and may not fully represent the richness and diversity of the Consortium's efforts. The following summarizes what we consider as strengths of the Consortium, as well as our concerns regarding the implementation of school-to-work in this region.

- There is a strong management infrastructure comprised of Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium business and education representatives. The Consortium has a clear vision, with specific goals and action plans.
- Business plays a visible implementation role in school-to-work. The Columbia River Education and Workforce Council has worked hand-in-hand with the Consortium in implementing school-to-work in the area. CREWC is taking the lead in developing an employability portfolio for use by all high school graduates within the Consortium.
- The Clark County Vocational Skills Center, funded by multiple school districts, plays an important role in implementing school-to-work programs, and is becoming a one-stop career center for many students in the area. The quality programs offered through the Center are changing its image; it now serves not only at-risk students but also talented and gifted students.
- School-to-work is emerging as a *system* that combines various education reform strategies and funding resources, such as Tech Prep, JTPA, and Cooperative Education.
- Inclusion of special populations is comprehensive. The State School for the Deaf and the State School for the Blind are part of the school-to-work consortium. Staff members interviewed at the State School for Deaf were very positive about being a

part of the Consortium, and reported that activities organized through the Consortium have benefited students as well as teachers.

- Efforts have been made to expand school-to-work to middle and elementary schools.
- Some existing programs have been integrated into school-to-work. For example, the Journey's Program at Camas High School, integrating English, health, and world studies, was not originally part of the school-to-work initiative. We saw similar integrated programs in other schools.
- Students are generally aware of work-based learning opportunities, and a large number have had job shadow experiences. The PIE (Partnership in Education) Network, a home page developed by Education Service District 112 in collaboration with the Consortium, is potentially a cost-effective tool to link schools to businesses for the benefit of the youth in the area.
- Senior projects now required in some of the schools represent a good school-to-work curriculum component. These projects require students to link their academic work to real-work experience outside their schools, and to write a report on such linkage.

Program Concerns

- School-to-work is still optional rather than mandated in Washington schools. Although this is beyond the control of the Consortium, it limits the full potential of school-to-work for all students and threatens the reality of establishing school-to-work as a system which will umbrella all other school reform efforts.
- Some juniors and seniors felt their job shadowing occurred too late in their K-12 experience. They said an earlier job shadow experience would have helped them make better choices among the high school courses available to them.
- A division still exists between vocational and academic learning. Some academic staff do not believe in the value of job shadowing and other work-related experiences.
- Career paths are still viewed by some teachers as tracking rather than as opportunities to explore various career interests and integrate academic and vocational learning.
- Rural schools still find it difficult to implement school-to-work. Not enough electives are available in these schools to support the career path model.
- We did not find serious efforts being made to collect data on the impact of school-to-work on students in their academic performance and future postsecondary options.

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- The Consortium has not done an adequate job of encouraging participating businesses to communicate with one another about their school-to-work experiences.
- Without school-to-work funding for the next three years, these reported efforts for all students in this region will "go for naught."

Columbia River School-to-Work Consortium List of Persons Interviewed

Scott Bailey, Washington Employment Department
Susan Beedle, VA Medical Center
Phyllis Goldhammer, Business Partnership Coordinator
Nancy John, Tech Prep coordinator, Clark College
Kelly Joy, Sharp
Beth Taylor, Private Industry Council
Doug Sessions, education coordinator, Hewlett-Packard
Jill Smith, coordinator, Columbia School-to-Work Consortium

Study Team for Columbia River School-to-Work

Changhua Wang, NWREL
Dan Aslin, teacher, Roosevelt High School
Maureen Carr, NWREL
Nancy Lisook, media specialist, Roosevelt High School
Michele Martinez, research associate, NWREL
Carol Monohon, Association of Washington Business
Toni Reed, teacher, Roosevelt High School
Mark Steward, special assistant, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
Andrew Thorness, teacher, Roosevelt High School

KITSAP PENINSULA VOCATIONAL SKILLS CENTER

Site Report Author: Roy Kruger

Introduction

A four-member study team composed of Claudia Buxton, Sheryl Havens, Michael Henderson, Larry Thomas conducted a site visit of the Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center (hereafter referred to as the Center) on January 9 and 10, 1997. The focus of the visit was to learn more about the impact of the Center's vocational training programs on students, with special emphasis on the extended-day or session III program, which is primarily a student dropout retrieval program. Site visit activities included a briefing meeting; review of project document; interviews with students, teachers, session III student services specialist; school administrators, and community worksite managers; visits to worksites providing work experience to students; a focus group meeting of session III students. A list of individuals interviewed is included at the end of this site report.

Context

Located on the Kitsap Peninsula across the straits from Seattle, the skills center is a vocational education cooperative serving six member school districts in a three-county area: Bremerton, Central Kitsap, North Kitsap, North Mason, Peninsula, and South Kitsap. The Center provides training opportunities for high school students, high school- aged students no longer attending school, and adults participating in programs by virtue of the Center's growing number of cooperative agreements with local community colleges. In addition, the Center has been instrumental in working collaboratively with area school district superintendents, vocational directors, and Olympic College in developing a West Sound School-to-Career Transition Strategic Plan. This regional consortium has agreed to use the essential goals, objectives, and activities stated in this plan as the basis for coordinating program development within the region.

During the two day visit, the study team was genuinely impressed with the dedication and commitment exhibited by staff and administrators toward each other and students. The actions of the Center's personnel clearly exemplified its stated mission:

> *Our mission is to prepare students for a productive role in the future developing job skills, talents, self-esteem, critical thinking, leadership skills, personal and career goals, and a sense of community. We believe that all learners can be successful in the vocation of their choice.*

Program Components

The Center has developed and implemented a comprehensive curriculum based on self-paced, hands-on modules that exemplify the theoretical underpinnings of Gardner's seven intelligences: (1) verbal/linguistic, (2) logical/mathematical, (3) visual/spatial, (4) body/kinethetic, (5) intrapersonal, (6) interpersonal, and (7) musical/rhythmic. The team observed vocational classes that were a combination of doing activities and studying academic principles. For example, session I and II construction trades students, who are building houses for the homeless, have their bus set up as a classroom. Half of the class works on studies specifically related to the project, while the other half is actually working on the house.

Since opening its doors in 1978, the Center has provided an opportunity for high school students (ages 16 to 21 and/or grades 11 and 12) to obtain quality occupational training while exploring potential postsecondary educational and employment opportunities. Over the years the Center's traditional high school program (session I, 8:00-10:30 a.m.; session II, 11:10-1:40 p.m.) has expanded into 13 vocational specialties: (1) automotive technology, (2) collision repair technology, (3) construction trades, (4) cosmetology, (5) early childhood educational assistant, (6) engineering technology-CADD, (7) fashion merchandising, (8) food services and culinary arts, (9) office technology-legal, (10) office technology-medical, (11) natural resources technology, (12) professional medical careers, and (13) welding technology. The Center has worked closely with area school districts in designing a cohesive, integrated school-to-work career pathways program (see figure 1). During the 1995-96 school year, the Center averaged 440 students in session I and II classes.

Extended-day program. In 1994 administrators began investigating the feasibility of expanding the Center's program to include teenagers who were no longer attending high school. In the fall of 1995 the Center implemented the extended-day program (session III) with classes scheduled after 2:00 p.m. The primary focus of the session III program is to try to provide an opportunity (many times the only opportunity) for teens to learn basic vocational skills while providing a stabilizing influence in their chaotic lives. Students who were interviewed described being "pushed out" of their high schools by administrators who labeled them as failures, and difficult living situations at home, as the most frequent reasons for dropping out of school. Other reasons mentioned included the challenges of teen parenting, family financial exigency, family disintegration, homelessness, and disciplinary actions taken by their home high school.

Figure 1

Career Pathway	Center Programs
Business & Marketing	Fashion Merchandising
	Food Service & Culinary Arts
	Professional Business Services & Computer Applications
Arts & Communications	Cosmetology
	Engineering Technology/Computer Aided
	Drafting & Design
	Fashion Merchandising
	Food Service & Culinary Arts
Technology & Trades	Automotive Technology
	Collision Repair Technology
	Construction Trades
	Food Service & Culinary Arts
	Natural Resources
	Welding & Fabrication
Health & Social Services	Engineering Technology/Computer Aided
	Drafting & Design
	Natural Resources Technology
	Professional Medical Careers
Science & Engineering	Engineering Technology/Computer Aided
	Drafting & Design
	Natural Resources Technology
	Professional Medical Careers

A selection of full courses in cosmetology, culinary arts, and construction trades are offered to extended-day program students, as well as a work-based learning class, and community work experience opportunities. The Center's staff also works hard in trying to help session III students reenter an academic program in order to finish their high school degree or obtain a GED. However, completion of a Center program or reentry into a high school or community college program is a constant struggle for this specific population because of the immense financial and family-related challenges they face.

Student composition. As of the end of 1996 there were approximately equal percentages of men (53 percent) and women (47 percent) participating in session III. The ethnic composition of the students was 85 percent Caucasian, nine percent African-American, and six percent Native American. Half of the students were enrolled in the construction trades classes, 31 percent in the culinary arts, and 19 percent in cosmetology. Three-quarters of these students were enrolled in the work-based learning class and 19 percent were actively involved in work experience opportunities.

Funding of program. The Center's original school-to-work grant of $75,000 was used for computers, clerical support, and the recruitment of the session III services specialist. At this time the Center is not receiving school-to-work funds but a direct state apportionment. Based on the state's apportionment formula of a .6 FTE to the Center/.4 FTE to the sending school for each student attending the Center, the Center is allotted $2,640 per student to cover curricular, clerical, administrative, and operational expenses. The Center estimates that this is less than half the actual cost of educating students. Prohibited from raising revenues through local bond or property tax levies, the Center has had to seek additional ways of increasing the utilization of its facilities to generate additional funds.

The Center has devised several creative ways to increase revenues, including implementing a 15-day high school summer program and opening the extended-day program to community college students through cooperative program agreements with local community colleges (i.e., Associate in Cosmetology program from Olympic College).

Work-based learning. The school has also developed creative ways of providing students with hands-on learning experiences by offering services to the public that generate revenues to help recoup their expenses. For example, the automotive technology class services 250 cars a year and the collision repair class repairs about 30 cars. The culinary arts program runs a weekly restaurant and does frequent banquets. The CADD class has produced over 700 drawing of local buildings for the fire department. The natural resources technology program manages an 8,000-acre watershed where students take water and soil samples, make bear feeders, and protect animals and their habitat. The fashion merchandising class puts on a fashion show every year and students are employed in special internships at the Bon Marche during Christmas time. However, the Center emphasizes that they are not in the business of production, but involving students in those work opportunities increases the effectiveness of student learning and provides a connection with the community.

Team members found the Center's programs to be exemplary of both the Brandon Roberts and Associates, and Phelps and Wermuth standards of exemplary programs. In a January 1997 report to the Oregon School-to-Work Office, Job Training Partnership Administration Office, and Workforce Quality Council, Brandon Roberts listed five principles that capsulate the national school-to-work vision (*Assessment of School-to-Work Systems Building*, Brandon Roberts and Associates, January 1997, p.4):

1. High standards including a focus on both academic and work based competencies
2. Career awareness encompassing the full range of career opportunities
3. Contextual learning and career themes
4. Work-based learning opportunities ranging from field visits through job shadows and internships

5. Transitions from high school through postsecondary training, higher education and career employment

The study team found that teachers and administrators maintained high student outcome expectations, emphasized career opportunities in their disciplines, employed contextual learning in their classes, assisted students in exploring and finding work-based learning opportunities, and assisted students in exploring and finding postsecondary educational and entry level career opportunities.

In 1992 Phelps and Wermuth developed a set of exemplary program standards which OSS reviewers had adopted as part of their evaluation criteria they use in assessing program (What Makes Programs Exemplary, NCRVE, http://ncrve.berkeley.edu/MSD-856/what.html). The study team felt that the Center strongly exhibited the following standards:

Program administration. Staff and students know who to approach to communicate ideas and problems. The director and assistant director are extremely approachable by both students and staff. Students feel free to call administrators by their first names, and an open-door policy was clearly in evidence.

Individualized curriculum modifications. Good programs individualize all aspects of the curriculum to fit the needs of students. The constructions trades, automotive technology, cosmetology, and culinary arts teachers discussed the student program workbooks, and the way in which students move through them at their own speed within a general time frame.

Integration of academic and vocational curricula. Integrating academic and vocational education has proven to be an extremely effective way of educating students, especially those who are at risk of failing in the traditional classroom. Integrated curriculum programs require students to complete a sequence of courses and master identified competencies or skills. Students mentioned that what they liked best was the hands-on experiences. Students in the construction trades took pride in actually building houses for the homeless, for example, while some students in cosmetology were developing a regular clientele.

Intra- and interagency collaboration. Intra- and interagency collaboration serves as important avenues for funding, recruiting volunteers, and getting referrals. Departments and programs within the educational institution collaborate to provide support services, resources, and general assistance to the staff. Interagency cooperation is essential. All possible community resources are incorporated into the school or institution. The administration works very hard at preserving good working relationships with collaborating high schools. The evaluation study team met with JTPA representatives who provide selected session III students with support services, such as money for transportation, books and work closes. The team also met with representatives of Olympic College who coordinate a number of cooperative programs.

Work experience opportunities. In order to successfully transition from school to work, students must avail themselves of work experience opportunities during their enrollment in the program. School services related to work experience include information about the type and nature of work opportunities that are available to program participants, how these opportunities relate to instructional objectives of the program, and the extent to which experiences are specific to the vocational education and training received by students. The evaluation team was able to visit worksites where extended-day students were employed at the Bremerton Housing Authority and see some of the projects that the students had completed. Students in the engineering and technology tract were involved in producing building drawings for the City of Bremerton Fire Department, and students in the natural resources technology tract were involved in projects with the City of Bremerton Forestry and Parks Department. The placement of large numbers of extended-day students in work experience opportunities, however, is hampered by the challenges faced by many of these students of making it from one day to the next.

Job placement. Successful programs assist students with job placement services that help students, especially those who are members of special populations, in identifying available jobs, and assist students in securing employment following the completion of the program. The work-based learning instructor is actively involved in assisting extended-day students in learning about work opportunities, developing resumes, and participating in job interviews. The Center has been successful in helping these students obtain temporary employment while at the Center and entry-level positions once they graduate. Past graduates return to the Center to speak to classes and develop informal networking systems.

Curriculum development. Another important component of the Center's overall program is the adaptation of the community-building curriculum of the Tribes organization. This curriculum includes community circles and behavioral agreements. Four key tenants govern the behavior between students and students, and students and teachers:

1. **Attentive listening.** Paying close attention to one another's expression of ideas and feelings; letting others know that they have been heard and checking for understanding.

2. **Appreciation/no put-downs.** Treating each other kindly and stating appreciation for unique qualities and helpful contributions, while avoiding negative remarks, name calling, hurtful gestures, and behaviors.

3. **Right to pass.** Having the right to choose when and to what extent you will participate in group activities; knowing that voluntary participation enhances learning.

4. **Mutual respect.** Recognizing the value and uniqueness of each person; resolving conflicts that naturally emerge due to the differences among us, and offering feedback that encourages growth.

The study team found these four agreements posted in most of the classrooms within the Center, and during interviews and focus groups students, teachers, and administrators mentioned the important effect the Tribes program has had in creating an effective school climate for learning.

The Center is actively involved in the Jobs for American Graduates (JAGS) program, and in the process of converting the work-based and academic competencies for all of its courses to bar codes for use with a computer database Bar Code Competency Management System. This system provides an effective method for maintaining an accurate record of the competency attainments for each student. A number of the teachers were observed using the system in assessing student work. Competencies are assessed over a five-point scale (each with its unique bar code):

1. Does not meet employability
2. Meets some employability
3. Meets most employability
4. Meets employability
5. Exceeds employability

Specific JAG competencies supported by the Center's curriculum include career development skills, job survival skills, and basic communication and problem solving skills.

Program Strengths

Kitsap has gone to extra efforts to meet the special needs of session III students. Students can enroll in the extended-day program at any time during the semester. With the advent of the new program, faculty found that they needed to develop the curriculum based on self-guided learning modules that has also been adapted in the sessions I and II programs. Average enrollments in the extended-day program during 1995, 1996, and 1997 have been 56, 51, and 44 respectively.

The Center works closely with the JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) to provide living expenses for students while they participate in work experiences. Special cooperative programs with Olympic College and other local community colleges provide opportunities for students to complete GED programs.

Class sizes in session III are smaller than those in sessions I and II, providing students with the extra individualized attention mentioned by students as so important in turning their lives around. In focus group interviews students described the Center as their "second chance" or "last chance." They said that if it wasn't for the Center they would probably sleep all day or be working at some low paying job.

The Center appears to have brought motivation and goals to the lives of these young men and women. More than that, it has brought them a sense of community and belonging. Several students have secured employment and postseconday training that would not otherwise have been available to them. Students talked about the program instilling leadership skills and allowing them to see positive attributes in themselves that they had never before thought existed.

In focus group sessions, session III students expressed how important the adoption of the Tribes relationship agreements was in helping them feel accepted and part of the Center community. Students described how they were shown respect by administrators and staff, and said that sharing time during the program's community circles helped them to appreciate others who were different from themselves. Students and staff were on a first- name basis with each other and with administrators.

A part-time session III student services specialist works closely with students to help them reenroll back into the educational system, find specialized training opportunities, and to find appropriate work experience opportunities in the community. The student services specialist also teaches the work-based learning course.

Program Challenges

Teachers reported that there were important differences between session III students and students in session I and II, namely more off-task behaviors, attention difficulties, study skill deficiencies, and home worries that effect their ability to learn. Staff reported that they need the following to continue to successfully work with students: additional clerical support, money for expendable supplies, maintenance of smaller classes, and a caseworker to work with students.

Administrators emphasized the crucial challenges of (1) inadequate funding, (2) student financial barriers, and (3) teacher recruitment, preparation, and professional development.

The challenge of operating the Center on the state's present funding apportionment is exacerbated by the extended-day program's smaller class sizes. The costs of operating the session III program are higher on a per student basis than sessions I and II. The full-time faculty (sessions I and II) in turn feel the effects of money diverted from their budgets to subsidize the extended-day program.

State statutes governing the use of public funds also limit the ability of the Center to adequately address the financial barriers faced by students, such as providing money for transportation to and from the Center, costs associated with obtaining a GED, and child care for teenage mothers. Providing transportation to school and worksite opportunities, and child care were the needed program changes most frequently mentioned by students during focus groups. Although the JTPA is able to provide some relief for session III students in the construction trades, the percentage of individuals participating in JTPA internships is a small fraction or extended-day students.

Providing transportation for session III as part of their course work has also been a challenging limitation for the Center. Session I and II students are provided with bus transportation to and from their sending school, and to course-related activities off campus. However, no similar bus service is provided for the extended-day program. session III construction trade students are limited to projects within walking distance of the campus. A recent construction trades project is building a home for a homeless family. Session I and II students are provided with daily transportation to the building site. Session III students, on the other hand, are limited to building a model of the house in their classroom.

Another apparent ongoing challenge for the Center is recruiting qualified teachers and maintaining an adequate professional development program for faculty. Kitsap teachers need a standard teaching credential as well as a vocational certificate, with continual opportunities for upgrading their skills and knowledge of industry standards. Attracting qualified part-time teachers for the extended-day program presents even greater challenges. Contract stipulations have limited the involvement of full-time faculty in the extended-day program and the 2:00 to 5:30 PM, middle-of-the-day, schedule limits the number of professionals who can teach at the Center. Those professionals that have been recruited for session III tend to have the least amount of teaching experience, teaching the students with the highest level of learning difficulties.

Promising Practices

The major promising practices mentioned by all study team members and describe in the prior sections were:

- **Bar code technology** used in assessing, recording, and managing student attainment of academic and vocational skills competencies.
- **Tribes curriculum** used as a centralizing framework for school community and relationship building. The program was instrumental in improving student and staff cooperation, trust, respect, caring, and communication.
- **Small classes** provide flexible, personalized contextual learning opportunities for all students. The is a high level of flexibility, interest, dedication, and commitment exemplified by the teachers and staff in meeting individual academic and occupational skill needs of students.
- **Contextual learning modules** designed to provide students with a hands-on, relevant learning experience in vocational and SCANS skills.

Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center List of Persons Interviewed

Mourine Anduiza, director
William Poss, assistant director
Robert Vincent, student services specialist
Wendy Roberts, student
Chris Moen, student
Joe Duncan, student
Tim Updegrove, student
Jeremy Peet, student
Lynn Saulk, student
Joleen Rhodes, student
Andres Simpson, student
Kyle Dusembury, student
Ryan Stuart, student
Brent Straight, teacher, construction trades
Gary Fuller, teacher, food services
Don Belcher, teacher, collision repair technology
Anna Carney, teacher, cosmetology
Isabell Jaeckel, teacher, food services
Jean Conyers, teacher, cosmetology
Beverly Kincaid, representative, Olympia College
Mary Garguile, representative, Olympia College

Study Team for Kitsap Peninsula Vocational Skills Center

Roy Kruger, NWREL
Claudia Buxton, director, Sno-Skills Center
Sheryl Havens, psychologist, Cherry Valley Elementary School
Michael Henderson, state coordinator, Jobs for Washington Graduates
Larry Thomas, The Center for Career and Work-Related Education, Highline College

METHOW VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Site Report Author: Bruce Miller

Introduction

A four-member team was assembled to conduct a follow-up evaluation of the school-to-work program in the Methow Valley School District on December 10, 11, and 12, 1996. This program was first evaluated in February 1995. Prior to the 1996 site visit, school personnel were contacted and arrangements made for observing and interviewing a cross section of individuals directly involved in the school-to-work program. These included students, teachers, administrators, and community representatives. In addition, background information such as grants, reports, forms, and related documents were made available to the evaluation team. A total of 44 individuals were interviewed, of which 32 were students. A draft version of this report was reviewed for accuracy by key site participants such as the school-to-work coordinator, superintendent, and high school principal.

Context

Liberty Bell High School, with an enrollment of 376 students (grades 7-12) is located between the towns of Twisp and Winthrop in the Methow Valley, a 50-mile long corridor in the north central Cascades. The nearest town one might consider a metropolitan area is Wenatchee, a two-hour drive from the school district offices in Winthrop. The school district is rural and remote, with a population for the two communities served by the district of about 1,300 people. Residents can be organized into four distinct groups: (1) old timers whose livelihoods revolved around resource-dependent work such as mining, logging, and agriculture; (2) alternative life style people who have left urban areas for the rural, natural environment; (3) destination resort/tourism entrepreneurs; and (4) retirees. With the decline in the resource-dependent job sectors such as logging, mining, and agriculture, the valley's economy has shifted toward tourism and service-related industries. In addition, the cyclical nature of resource extraction and tourism create an uneven economic picture, with a boom/bust-like cycle. The school district provides the most steady employment and, with little teacher turnover, some of the highest paid work in the valley.

Funding. A 21st Century Schools grant in 1990 allowed the Methow School District and the community to restructure the educational program and bring the community in as an active partner through the creation of community-based instructional activities created and taught by residents. Out of this initial work emerged Methow Valley as a Classroom (MVCR) and a comprehensive strategic plan within which new and future grants and activities have been and would be integrated. Under the original school-to-work grant, the staff requested resources to provide time for them to plan collaboratively for the integration of academic and vocational activities. This time was created when students participated in MVCR. Because of funding cuts and other factors such as staff turnover and the creation of a single educational campus, this collaborative planning time has been severely curtailed.

School-to-work funds have been used to extend the original reform efforts begun in 1990, including the district's most recent effort, the development and implementation of a career pathways program. The current school-to-work program consists of the following components, with items 9-13 having been added since the 1995 evaluation:

1. Methow Valley as a Classroom (MVCR)
2. Diversified Occupations program (DO)
3. Community Resource Training program (CRT)
4. Personal Choices (a freshman course addressing applied communications such as personal decisionmaking and career choices)
5. Independent Living (a senior level course that addresses applied communications such as resume writing, job interviews, and income tax preparation.)
6. Block scheduling to create time for project and community-based activities
7. Pathways to Academic and Career Success (a program beginning in the freshman year that helps student think about and plan their career choices)
8. Washington Occupational Information System (WOIS) begins at grade six
9. Expedition Methow, a 7th and 8th grade course designed to help students better understand and appreciate the natural environment of the Methow Valley
10. Running Start (a program through Wenatchee Valley College that provides college level programming while still in high school)
11. A life-long learning strand woven into the physical education program
12. An occupational trades strand

In general, school-to-work centers around two goals: (1) to help students leave high school with real-world experiences and academic skills that will prepare them for the world of work, whether that means college, being an auto mechanic, or attending a trade school, and (2) to provide students the opportunity to work with mentors and models in the community who can show how they live and work to accomplish important goals. Within these two goal areas, the 10 objectives of the MVCR (enumerated below) can be applied.

The district has charted a course toward making the entire educational enterprise serve the postsecondary needs of students. MVCR, Diversified Occupations, Community Resource Training, and the academic program continue to provide the basic structure for school-to-work. However, with the addition of a pathways program, WOIS, Expedition Methow, Running Start, and a life-long learning and trades strand, the school-to-work program has been better articulated to meet the diverse needs of all students and the rural context of the Methow Valley. Expedition Methow provides a quarter-long enrichment class that helps students appreciate the place where they live by making the local environment the curriculum of study. A school staff person with the help of over 20 community instructors teach the course. The rural context is often overlooked by those from non-rural areas and colleges who tend to define school-to-work in terms of metropolitan job opportunities such as robotics and computer technology. As the superintendent and members of the vocational advisory committee pointed out in interviews, "The Valley is growing and the need for individuals skilled in the trades is greater than ever and not every student wants to go to college. Many students would stay in the Valley if they could find employment."

During the 1995 evaluation, district staff described how they wanted to expand school-to-work activities into the middle school, further develop school-to-work connecting activities such as the integration of school-to-work and academic programs, development of an integrated trades program, integration of curriculum content, a senior project requirement using community-based committees, and the use of alternative assessment such as portfolio assessment of workplace competencies. Despite cuts in funding, demands related to a new school building program, and staff changes, the district has managed to stay its course in offering expanded school-to-work opportunities. However, the area that still requires the greatest need is the integration of academic and school-to-work experiences. Nonetheless, progress continues to be made.

Unfortunately, financial cutbacks and other circumstances have reduced the pace of implementation. For the last two years the school district has been actively pursuing a strategic goal of having all three district schools (elementary, middle, and high school) merged together on one campus. This has meant building a new high school that integrates middle grade students and the remodeling of the old high school into an elementary school. Both the construction and the alignment of high and middle school schedules have been challenging. Five new teachers were hired along with a new high school principal. The district began their first full year of the pathways program and the use of student portfolios. The district was also instrumental in being selected as an Annenberg Rural Challenge site along with a consortium of four other districts. Given all these near simultaneous changes, it is remarkable the amount of progress the district has made in the last two years.

Program Components

Given the rural character of the Methow School District, the school-to-work program does not have the broad base of a traditionally articulated program of career, vocational, and academic courses. However, with the implementation of a career pathways and portfolio information program, the district has managed to articulate the diversity of community and school resources available in the Valley - no small feat for an isolated rural school district. It may well be that this program does much more than prepare youth for a career pathway. One gets a sense from talking with both youth and adults that students also develop an appreciation for the community, its culture, and the place called the Methow Valley.

A credit strand of vocational choices is provided within the academic program of the school, and all students take a three-course vocational strand. The college prep program is the same as the vocational strand except for advanced college courses. In addition, a trades strand (called Technology Education) that is still in its infancy has been implemented in collaboration with MVCR. Students can take applied courses in woods and metals to learn fundamentals and advanced skills, including computer-aided drafting and project management. This program came on line with the completion of the Methow Valley's new high school and the hiring of a trades instructor.

Because the school is small, the number of electives is limited (non-academic electives are offered in business, home economics, shop, art, and music) and that is why all students participate in MVCR. Taken together with the district's more traditional credit options, MVCR represents a truly unique and effective strategy to expand student experiences and opportunities for career exploration.

Methow Valley as a Classroom. The central component of school-to-work is the Methow Valley as a Classroom (MVCR) program, in which students participate in community-based learning experiences. The experiences fall into four strands: (1) career/jobs skills; (2) leisure and recreational time activities; (3) informational classes; and (4) community service. Community instructors from local businesses, government agencies, community groups, and individuals with expertise in areas of interest to the students teach the courses. MVCR was designed to extend the school curriculum and provide career exploration options using the resources available in this remote rural community.

Ten objectives provide a focus for the program:

- Build a relationship between school and community
- Introduce high school students to local job opportunities
- Acquaint high school students with local talents
- Involve high school students in leisure activities of the Methow Valley
- Involve high school students in service within the community
- Expose high school students to a full-day experience
- Provide the opportunity for older people to get to know school teenagers
- Provide freshman with an orientation to the MVCR program
- Provide time for high school teachers to plan, reorganize, meet and evaluate
- Recognize the volunteer instructors with an evening of appreciation

The unique feature of MVCR is that all students participate in the community-based activities and courses, choosing from a published set of more than 200 course descriptions. The majority of activities are non-credit and driven by the interests of the community and students. For example, a senior who was interested in cosmetology, arranged a class with a local cosmetologist for six students. Students not only gained first-hand experience, but they learned about training opportunities for the future. Because MVCR focuses on all students, no stigma is associated to being vocational as opposed to college bound. MVCR addresses life-long learning needs of students by letting them experience a broad array of career and recreational opportunities.

The MVCR occurs for five weeks in the fall, six weeks in the winter, and two full days in the spring. The fall and winter activities are scheduled for every Wednesday afternoon, providing two-and-a half to three hours of community-based instruction. The spring activities are more in-depth experiences such as a Forest Service course in fire fighting that leads to a firefighter's certificate. Students do not get paid for their involvement in MVCR, although contact with employers often leads to summer and/or full-time employment.

The MVCR program has been sustained for more than six years and appears well managed and supervised, winning unanimous support from parents, students, teachers, and every group interviewed. It has received national attention and been documented by the National Education Association. The program might be transferable to other rural communities similar to the Methow Valley, but care must be taken to ensure broad-based support of all constituent groups. Moreover, the unique mix of people in the valley and school and their commitment to the people and the Methow Valley environment contributes to the success of the program.

Interest in MVCR from outside the district has been high. School staff members have made presentations on MVCR to state, regional, and national conferences. The program has been featured in journals, newsletters, and on national television. Because of the many inquiries and visitors over the six years of implementation, an implementation guide has been developed by the program coordinator and her husband. They have conducted workshops as far away as Alaska using these materials.

Other work-based experiences. In addition to MVCR, the district offers numerous other workplace opportunities: Diversified Occupations (DO), the Community Resource Training program (CRT), and employment training for qualified students through the Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) and the Department of Social and Health Services/Department of Vocational Rehabilitation (DSHS/DVR). JTPA is for students who qualify based on financial need. DVR is for students who have a handicap. All other programs are open to all students at the junior and senior level. CRT is also available for special needs students. Students can participate, within school hours, for up to 80 minutes (based on the new block schedule). Participation beyond this would come out of the student's own time. Interestingly, according to high school English teacher, Claudia Gordon, "*CRT has become a vehicle to network around student interests. For example, a high school student interested in paleontology was able to get CRT to place her with someone at the Forest Service with expertise in paleontology. She was trained in GIS. Now there is an equalization of status so academic kids are in a vocational track.*"

The special education teacher, the Diversified Occupations/Community Resource Training Program coordinator, and the MVCR coordinator collaborate closely. DO and JTPA programs are wage paying, with pay established by the employer. No student receives below minimum wage.

CRT students have a specific skills/objective plan they must meet, and both CRT and DO students receive credit for the workplace experiences. The criteria for passing DO placements is established by the employer.

Curriculum. The basic core curriculum has expanded to include school-to-work activities, most notably MVCR. But other activities, presented below, also address postsecondary life skills. At the freshman level, CRT is often used to help place special needs students, although at years three and four, regular students may opt for CRT experiences.

Year 1:
- Freshman orientation to high school, Career Pathways and MVCR
- Participation, on a limited basis, in MVCR
- Basic core academics
- Personal Choices
- Information processing
- Reading for life-time skills
- CRT for special needs students only
- Electives: music, art, and trades

Year 2
- Full participation in MVCR
- Computer technology
- Basic core academics
- Reading for life-time skills
- CRT for special needs students only
- Electives: music, art, and trades

Year 3: MVCR
- Basic core academics
- Reading for life-time skills
- CRT
- DO
- Electives: music, art, and trades

Year 4: MVCR
- Basic core academics
- Reading for life-time skills
- CRT
- Independent living or Diversified Occupations
- Electives: music, art, and trades

All community-based/worksite experiences follow a planned curriculum. Community volunteer instructors develop a written set of expectations for their course that is shared with each student. Some plans are elaborate and detailed, as found in the Forest Service's fire fighting certificate program. However, most plans are less elaborate because instructors are experts in their fields, relying less on written plans and more on learning by doing.

The MVCR program incorporates a coordinator who works with students, teaching staff, the counselor, and parents to ensure the best placement in MVCR, including the creation of new MVCR activities to meet emerging student needs. In addition, an advocacy period used for boosting reading skills and addressing MVCR curriculum needs within the existing academic schedule has been created within the block schedule. In many ways, it also serves as a home room for teachers to counsel students.

Guidance and career development. All students complete a graduation plan that lays out their program of studies for the four years and includes vocational options provided within the school's academic program. However, it is MVCR that appears to provide students with the broadest exposure to vocational experiences that address their personal career and life interests. With the introduction of pathways, MVCR as well as academic and vocational programming have been given a potentially more meaningful context for students. During freshman orientation, students are given an interest inventory and introduced to career pathways. With pathways, MVCR is framed within the context of career and life choices.

With more than 200 community-based options to choose from, students are generally able to match their interests with the appropriate field experiences. Where their interests differ from available activities, every effort is made to develop an option to address their interests. Based on interviews with students, the team found that MVCR works very well in meeting their interests and helping them discovery possible career options for the future. Only about 5 percent of students choose to take study hall during MVCR, which means that at any given MVCR session, 95 percent of all high school students are participating. DO, CRT, and the courses Personal Choices and Independent Living also provide opportunities for career exploration and development. However, with the introduction of pathways and portfolio information, career exploration and planning take on a more systematic and intentional activity for students, staff, and the community.

The school counselor works closely with the MVCR coordinator in ensuring student needs and interests are addressed. Counselor training involves directly experiencing MVCR and working with the MVCR coordinator who, by all accounts, does an excellent job of matching student interests with community-based options. This is accomplished through first-hand knowledge, interviewing students, parents, and teachers, and reviewing data from MVCR evaluation documents. The coordinator for DO and CRT works closely with the school counselor and the MVCR coordinator in addressing the needs of individual students. There has always been an effort to coordinate the diverse opportunities provided through MVCR, DO, CRT, and counseling services. With the advent of pathways and portfolios, coordination should be greatly enhanced.

During MVCR, students receive vocational and academic guidance through the mentor relationships established with community volunteer instructors. All instructors have been informed of the pathways materials and provided copies. Upon completing a MVCR course, students receive a written evaluation by the instructor that addresses workplace skills such as punctuality, enthusiasm, and politeness, with space provided for open-ended comments. This practice has continued unabated since the beginning of the program in 1991. However, by creating a single portfolio for each student, career and academic information can be consolidated in one place. This should help students better understand their progress and facilitate decisionmaking.

Job placement services. Formal job placement services do not appear to be needed, as the opportunities created by MVCR provide a steady labor pool for employers. Students receive training and exposure to potential employers. In fact, nearly every student interviewed had summer employment because of MVCR. For example, students who become certified as firefighters through the Forest Services fire fighting class have a head start on employment in the Valley. A new source of employment opportunities opened up last year with the development of a resort destination area at Early Winters. Every student who was placed there during MVCR obtained summer employment. Potential employers have the opportunity to try out employees before hiring. In short, MVCR and the way it is structured is its own job placement service.

Staff development. In 1991, school-to-work was envisioned as an integrated element of the total school program. School-to-work and 21st Century grant moneys have been used to realize that vision through extensive staff development opportunities. Although in the intervening six years, this vision has not been abandoned, there have been many changes that have slowed progress. As discussed previously, the district entered into a major building program, a new high school principal was hired, and funding opportunities diminished significantly. Moreover, the state has legislated new learning guidelines, especially in the area of assessment. All of these demands curtailed staff development opportunities.

Between 1991 and 1995, grant moneys supported numerous opportunities where teachers could plan and develop materials together. During this time period, all staff members participated in a collaboratively planned staff development program that occurred during MTVC time. Taking all this time together, staff had an average of seven days a year to collaborate. Moreover, there was money for extended contracts for summer work. When the district consolidated all of its schools, many high school teachers found they were also needed to teach middle school classes. As a result, there is no time during the school day when all teachers can collaborate and plan together. Moreover, grant money that had been available for funding summer teacher institutes is less prevalent. For the 1995-96 school year, by contrast, the district was able to support training opportunities for about 10 teachers.

Collaboration with business, industry, and labor. MVCR provides a comprehensive opportunity for community involvement in school-to-work opportunities. However, given the large number of community instructors who participate in MVCR at any one time, the total in-kind contributions must be quite large. Active involvement is also sustained through the ongoing coordination of school-to-work activities by the MVCR coordinator, and the coordinator of the DO and CRT programs. The superintendent has assumed the role of vocational director and spearheaded the development of a trades program in collaboration with the vocational advisory committee. In 1995, the trades program was simply a dream; in 1997, it is a fledgling program.

Labor has not been actively involved in school-to-work because the rural isolation of the community limits the types of industry available. Most businesses are so small they do not have organized labor affiliation. The one exception is the teacher's union, which has a master contract that helps guide working conditions and wages. The union has been an active partner in the educational reform efforts in the district.

Integration of academic and vocational learning. More effort needs to be placed on linking work-based learning experiences (i.e., MVCR, CRT, and DO) with the academic courses. This was an area of need identified by everyone interviewed. During the 1994-95 school year a block schedule was begun as a first step toward creating a structure within which increased integration could begin to happen. A four-period day of 80 minutes per period allowed students to work on projects in a sustained manner as well as pursue community-based learning within the longer time blocks. The schedule also allows increased opportunities for DO and CRT placements without disruption of their regular school schedule.

In 1995, few activities could be identified in which community-based learning experiences were used to enhance learning in the academic program. This was a major complaint of students then as it is now. Teachers who were interviewed in 1995 said they did not have the time or resources to move any faster toward such curriculum and community integration. Similar concerns were voiced by teachers during the current evaluation. Given the amount of changes the district has faced in the last two years, there may now be even more justification for these concerns about time and resources. Ironically, the last two years have seen an increase in connecting activities, although they have been primarily external to classroom instruction, with some exceptions that will be described on the following page.

Connecting Activities

The three main ways connections have occurred are through pathways, the MVCR Coordinator, and the new occupational trades program. These reflect connecting approaches that place little demand on teacher-community collaboration. However, there are several notable examples initiated by teacher-community collaboration.

The newly hired art teacher, Sean McCabe, clearly understands the importance of connecting art with the real world. He uses authentic context such as publications and developing logos for local organizations as a way "to give classroom art meaning." Sean has been named art director for the *Methow Naturalist Quarterly*, a publication that uses nothing but high school art. "Students learn layout, publishing standards, and pride," Sean points out.

Mike Houk offers a social studies projects class designed to improve student learning by integrating media and technology. The course draws fully on local resources through a collaborative arrangement with Cary Featherston of local radio station, KVLR. Students produce a two-hour weekly magazine-format radio show called "Liberty Bell Live." Students complete production work during classroom time and do a live performance every Monday evening. They conduct on-air interviews with local folks, and cover other topics of interest to the area. Student learn a wide range of workplace skills and are then given

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the opportunity to practice them in a real-life situation. Programming serves both the needs of students and those of the community.

Lifelong skills course. Another course that connects well with local resources and helps build career awareness is the life-long skills course offered by Gene Nelson, where students learn leisure activities, especially those native to the Methow Valley. In many cases, students living in the Valley have never taken advantage of the skiing, hiking, and fishing that makes the area a mecca for outdoor enthusiasts. Course activities have been designed to draw together the multiple resources that make MVCR a success. For example, when students are taught fly fishing, local Forest Service experts in stream ecology, fish, and insects work with Nelson and the students to develop a broad understanding of all the factors that create a healthy stream environment. Like "Liberty Bell Live," this course has been created to operate within the academic schedule. In this sense, both of these courses expand upon MVCR, but do not use MVCR time.

Pathways to academic and career success. In 1995 there was no formal process for monitoring the application of academic skills in workplace settings or helping students understand the job skill competencies required of any particular career area. In 1996, however, two strategies have been successfully implemented to ensure that students develop awareness of career opportunities and choices, and that their developed skills, practices, and competencies are documented and followed throughout high school. The first strategy is *Pathways to Academic and Career Success*, a series of six booklets, each covering a career pathway:

#1 Social, Educational, Health, and Personal Service

#2 Business and Marketing

#3 Business Operations and Communications

#4 Technology and Natural Resources

#5 Engineering, Science, and Medical Specialties

#6 Creative, Performing, and Applied Arts.

Each booklet provides information on the career pathway, including characteristics of successful people, a simple self-assessment tool, career families associated with the pathway, sample careers with their education level and job training requirements, and a host of other useful information. Pathways are introduced to all students, MVCR instructors and the instructional staff. One senior student, referring to pathways during focus group interviews, lamented, *"It is unfair that we didn't have these when we were first starting."*

Portfolio information packet. The second strategy, presently being pilot tested by the district, has been the use of a "Portfolio Information" packet for each student. Like the pathways, this document covers a broad range of important information students need to systematically track their progress through high school. Included in the portfolio are such items that show leadership, community involvement, student activities, work experiences, and MVCR placements. The packet also suggests additional items students may wish to include.

What surprised the evaluation team when talking with students was their awareness and understanding of the kinds of information included in the pathways and portfolio documents. Students from the focus groups conveyed a sense that the experiences they were having during these formative years meant something and should not be squandered. This sense of importance may be the reason why they valued those experiences most highly that lay closest to their interests and real-world applications. One student especially struck the team with his thoughtful responses regarding a community placement he had at a fish hatchery. He told of being mutated salmon minnows to his science class to share with other students. Ironically, the only connection made between his placement and his school courses was the one he himself initiated. One can only speculate how powerful a learning experience this placement could have been if it was fully integrated into the academic program.

Credit linkages. Another challenge that still faces the district is linking the MVCR experiences with academic classes in ways that provide some form of academic credit. In the 1995 evaluation, no credit linkages had been developed. Since that time, however, some creative strategies have been used to provide credit. For example, a major drama and musical production was offered through MVCR by a local instructor. Students received credit because of the extensive commitment of time and effort required. Moreover, work requirements for the credit were well articulated. In part, this credit was offered because the school did not provide any courses in drama. A second way credit has been offered is through a requirement that all seniors plan and design their MVCR experiences, find the instructor, and coordinate all scheduling and transportation. This requirement was instituted as a means of helping students learn to set goals and develop work plans. It also provides an opportunity to apply what they have learned from their past MVCR experiences. In an article appearing in the high school newspaper, Emily Torpey (1997) does an excellent job summarizing the impact of this new senior placement requirement.

> *When seniors were asked to create their own placements, many new ideas were hatched. Louis Jones and Ben Zimmerlund began an ice hockey class, a more exciting alternative to ice skating. Even though this class was created by seniors, any grade could participate. . . . Some other classes created by seniors were an independent study of nutrition and medicine . . . voice lessons . . . Jenny Liebl and Jeff Losinski who are aspiring to become teachers, developed their own teaching assistant programs. . . . These classes prove that MVCR, after seven years in the running, is still improving. (p. 2)*

Several detailed examples further illustrate the benefits of this requirement.

Two seniors interested in nutrition as a career identified mentors in the community who had professional experiences in nutrition. They also identified several medical and business establishments that rely on nutritional expertise. Plans were developed to use MVCR and CRT time for interviews and site visitations. As a result, these two seniors not only learned how to explore their interest in nutrition, but designed a program of study that would give them first-hand working knowledge of what a nutritionist does and the different opportunities for employment.

A second illustration helps shed light on how students are held to high expectations regarding their plans. Students have continued to want snowboarding activities as part of the leisure strand in MVCR. However, according to the program coordinator, Sandy Moody, it is sometimes difficult to link the fun of doing with the importance of learning. Because MVCR focuses on education and career goals, students have been challenged to describe and plan how the activity serves educational purposes. A senior wanted to do something related to snowboarding for his senior project, and Sandy challenged him to identify the educational purposes to be served by a snowboarding project. To Sandy's delight, the student developed a plan for creating an educational video for those interested in learning to snowboard.

The student located a community instructor with video expertise and equipment, designed a course, recruited 11 underclassman, and developed a storyboard for shooting the instructional video. Further, the senior student will shoot and edit the video, add music, and produce and market the final product. Interestingly, the student published an article about his senior project in the school newspaper in an edition devoted to student-initiated MVCR courses. A quote from the student article demonstrates a level of understanding and motivation in student initiated and designed learning activities:

> *The students worked with Mrs. Sandy Moody, MVCR's coordinator, to successfully create a placement and its participation requirements. On January 8 . . . the cameras were used for the first time. The students learned a lot about perspective, angles, movement and the amount of usable footage that is acquired from hours of recording. . . .The class wants to get together to film when the snow gets softer in March, even though MVCR will be over. Around that time editing will begin of all the footage and they will begin putting it in sequence according to a storyboard.* (Kelley, 1997, pp. 1 & 3)

These examples demonstrate how the Methow Valley school-to-work program continues to evolve toward the integration of the academic program and the vast community resources structured through MVCR. However, providing connecting activities like these still remain the biggest concern of those interviewed.

The Voice of Students

Focus group interviews were held with approximately 30 students, divided among three groups and representing a variety of grade levels. One group was special needs students, while the other two groups reflected a cross section of high performing college- and vocational-bound students to those at risk for failure. All students praised MVCR, saying that it gave them responsibility, addressed their interests, and provided for real-life, hands-on experiences. Special needs students said, "There are more fun classes available now and a bigger variety to choose from. You can also develop your own class." All focus group students said they would like to see more time spent in MVCR. One senior student described how she managed to extend her MVCR time, "I go through the vet experience every time we have MVCR because I want to be a vet. I also get vet time by signing up for every CRT and DO class I can fit into my schedule."

A summary of student comments reflects both the reasons why they like MVCR and how they see it fitting into their long-tern plans:

> *MVCR is fun; we get out of school. It is hands-on; you have a choice. You can even set up your own classes.*
>
> *It leads to jobs. I took skiing and rowing. Now I teach skiing.*
>
> *You also find out what you don't want to do and there is incredible diversity.*
>
> *It helps one to decide what one wants to do in the future.*
>
> *MVCR helps us become friends with adults and it helps give school a better reputation. We make connections with adults.*

In general, students felt the school had become more career focused and that was the result of MVCR. However, they unanimously felt there was a need for greater connection between the academic program and MVCR. They were both critical and insightful in their analysis of the problems facing classroom teachers. According to one student, there are "few connective activities in classrooms. People have different learning styles and to suggest that everyone learns best out of books misses the reality of the situation." However, the student went on to say, "connecting activities are difficult because the diversity makes the linkage hard and logistics are a problem." When asked for an example of a linking activities, one student said, "I had a Spanish class that went to a Spanish restaurant and we had to speak Spanish." Clearly, the need for relevance and application has not been missed by these students.

The Voice of the Community

Thirteen MVCR instructors met at the school to share their perception of the school-to-work program. This group included a forester, a local businessman, a Fish and Game employee, a representative of the arts community, a resort development supervisor, a veterinarian, and other active community volunteer instructors. Five individuals represented the school district's Outdoor Facilities Group, which was created to guide the planning and development of the district's new campus, including the creation of a 30-acre environmental site next to the school. These plans included activities designed to develop an environmental curriculum in collaboration with six science teachers from the school district.

This focus group had strong, yet supportive opinions. There was a feeling that school staff should work harder to bridge the gap between MVCR and existing curriculum. Moreover, this group made numerous constructive suggestions:

- Form advisory groups around various career strands (i.e., hospitality, tourism) to help think through linking activities.
- Create opportunities to get issues out on the table: How do we make kids advocates of their own learning? How do we institutionalize MVCR?
- Revisit the vision and purpose of MVCR: Is MVCR a viable project? Why? If so, how do we make it an institutional part of the way we do business?
- Create opportunities for community instructors and staff to collaborate: "I have had my kids in their school for 19 years and I can't remember a time when we got MVCR instructors and staff together."

The Voice of Teachers

A broad cross section of teachers in the school district were interviewed. Similar to the views of students and the community, teachers felt MVCR to be a valuable, core component of the school-to-work program. Several observations from teachers help clarify their feelings:

> *This is a complete program. It contains all the elements of school-to-work as well as all-around good teaching and learning. Only good things can be said about this program.*
>
> *Getting better and better – hope it will continue – excellent experience for kids.*
>
> *MVCR provides experiences that can lead to CRT courses. Example is a student who was placed in a fish hatchery experience, liked it, and later signed up for a CRT.*

But teachers also indicated that few connecting activities had been instituted in their own classrooms, with the exception of those examples discussed above (art, social studies projects, and life-long leisure). Interestingly, few outwardly negative comments or attitudes were presented about the idea of connecting. In fact, recent efforts seem to indicate a willingness to increase connecting activities. For example, teachers were prime movers in the development of the pathways program and many took an active role in freshman orientation. As one teacher pointed out, *"freshman orientation saw teachers carrying out the activities for the first time. It went from being the MVCR coordinator's program to our program."* Teachers have also become more engaged in MVCR classes, both as instructors and as participants. Although the percentage of teachers involved is low, it appears to be growing. One teacher even suggested that, *"staff should offer to teach MVCR courses in order to relieve the community instructors for a while."*

Numerous factors appeared to limit the degree of connectivity. Some involved individual attitudes and experience, while others reflected organizational issues such as scheduling and coordination. For example, several teachers voiced concerns about how to fit in new material when they already had a well developed lesson plans. There were also concerns about being disconnected from student placement in MVCR, and a lack of alignment between student work placements when a specific course is offered. One teacher said, "*I would like to align placements with course content, but scheduling is a problem. Often times, when students have course-related experiences, the course is not being offered.*" So scheduling appears problematic. However, for some teachers, the new block schedule has been helpful in building connections. "*The block has made PE much more manageable, creating time for lifetime skills,*" said one teacher, and, referring to science, "*Things are better than ever - have blocks of time to do labs.*" But the block schedule has also created challenges. As one teacher points out, "*Change the block so I can have the same kids all year.*" Scheduling was also mentioned by elementary teachers as a problem. When they use high school students as assistants in their classrooms, they noted, they must accommodate to when the student is available. "*Timing is a concern in order to utilize the students. Elementary teachers don't have a say in scheduling.*"

Many of the concerns raised reflect what one teacher, in describing MTVR, called it a program "*always under construction to adjust and improve.*" Adjustments take collaborative thinking and problem solving. Given the amount of change the district has faced in the last two years, it appears that time and the extra resources needed to create time have been scarce. There is an apparent need for the community and school district to reflect on all they have accomplished, especially in light of the challenges they have overcome. There is a need to take time to chart their future as an entire community of educators, parents, students, and residents. One teacher's near-breathless observation sums up this notion:

> *We added portfolios and goal-setting once a year . . . changed new plan sheets, added open house about pathways, and gave out much parent information. . . . Would like to see more career cross-over into the classroom . . . heading into student-lead conferences, getting kids excited, including parents more, continue college night and financial aid. . . . Need for staff development, more time, more assessment, more big picture, another orientation of school-to-work for all staff.*
>
> *. . . Need time to collaborate with specific goals, need time to work with staff that is on board, like to see staff advisors. The newness has worn off, needs infusion. . . . Need more team teaching.*

Conclusions

Since the evaluation two years ago, Methow Valley as a Classroom (MVCR) continues to be the centerpiece of the district's school-to-work program. More than 200 community-based learning experiences are offered to all students in grades 9 through 12. Since the school-to-work activities are predominantly community-based, a high level of support exists among all constituent groups in the community, including educational organizations that serve the community such as the Tech Prep program at Wenatchee Valley Community College. However, evidence from interview data suggests that after six years of operation, MVCR is beginning to tax community resources and patience in terms of finding and expanding program offerings and the integration of community-based experiences into the academic program. For example, the demand for community volunteer instructors has been increasing.

In 1995, the evaluation team observed that the primary users of MVCR and related community resources occurred at the high school level. Currently, evidence from interviews suggests that teachers from all grade levels are increasing their use. Two examples are worth noting. First, community agencies such as the Forest Service have had to increase expectations for using their staff. They now require that teachers have clear goals and that students be adequately prepared. Secondly, the community is beginning to demand collaboration with school staff. Many volunteer instructors, according to Sandy Moody, MVCR coordinator, take their MVCR courses seriously. They do not simply want students placed into their classes without knowing how the learning that occurs will be integrated into the regular school program. Clearly there is a need for more discussion around these issues between school and community teachers.

Those interviewed continue to be overwhelmingly positive about the school-to-work program, especially MVCR. They cite many success stories of how the program helped students choose career directions. Moreover, focus group interviews with students suggest they are learning how to use program components to expand their interests and obtain more community-based learning time. For example, one young women told us that she wanted to be a veterinarian and had signed up for every Community Resource Training (CRT) and Diverse Occupations (DO) credit she could manage. Students as well as faculty also mentioned that CRT time was also being chosen by students to expand and deepen their career options. In our evaluation two years ago, DO and CRT credits were primarily taken by special needs students and students with vocational interests. Currently, there does not seem to be any distinction between the vocational and college-bound students.

The Methow School District has managed to bring about major educational reform around the creation of school-to-work opportunities that use the rich resources available in their remote, rural community. With the Methow Valley as a Classroom serving as the nucleus of their school-to-work program, they represent a model approach that other rural communities might find worth exploring. However, the district's school-to-work program is not without needs. It has been nearly seven years since the community-school vision was developed that launched the school reforms discussed in this report. There are five new teachers and a new high school principal. The school district has undergone a major building and renovation project that puts all school children on the same campus. And the district has entered into a new educational consortium with the four adjacent school districts of Potaris, Chelan, Manson, and Entiat. Already the consortium has been funded collectively by Washington School to Work and the Annenburg Rural Challenge. Given the many positive changes in the district and the many challenges that the many changes have brought, it may be time to reexamine and reflect on where they have been and where they would like to go.

Recommendations

- The staff and community have made great strides in building a school-to-work program that is both effective and reflects the rural community and its values. They should continue to build on this good work, especially in the area of connecting community-based experiences with their academic courses. Time should be created for this purpose and the community invited into the discussion.

- Collaboration with the community should be increased, especially the MVCR instructors who have voiced a desire to build stronger linkages and improve the quality of their own instruction. For example, the Winthrop National Fish Hatchery staff have developed an outline for a course on the life cycle of salmon and their importance in the Northwest. How could this course and the expertise of hatchery staff be linked to the science program of the school?

- Methods used to screen and place students into MVCR experiences should continue to be improved, as well as ways to align placements with appropriate course content. In other words, with the block schedule, are there ways to set up MVCR classes that might serve as an extension of school-based project work?

- Teachers and the community should collaboratively review the direction and the goals for the school-to-work program and establish a working relationship where concerns and issues can be discussed openly and on an on-going basis. Teachers and community instructors voiced different perceptions of why there were not more connecting activities. In the school debriefing session with high school staff, a staff member indicated he had tried to make connections with community folks and they did not seem accommodating. In discussions with the community, similar comments were made about teachers. These varying perceptions need to be collaboratively shared and discussed. Moreover, the values and beliefs about community resources need to be discussed among community and staff in terms of what will contribute to the students ability to be successful in the world.

- Lastly, efforts should be made to experiment with ways to build the academic program around student interests. For example, what would a program look like that was build around the highly motivated interest of being a veterinarian or a fisheries biologist? How would the Fish and Game Department fit in? CRT and MVCR programming? The science program, English, etc.? For some students this may be far more productive than the current program.

Methow Valley School District List of Persons Interviewed

Patty Ahlfs, middle school teacher
Tucker Barksdale, middle and high school math and science teacher
Dennis Chambers, principal, Liberty Bell Jr/Sr. High School
Lynn Clark, high school special education teacher
Debra DeKalb, middle and high school counselor
Claudia Gordon, high school language arts teacher
John Lewis, high school science teacher
Chris Marcus, alternative school teacher
Sean McCabe, high school art teacher
Doug McHugo, Vocational Education
Sandra Moody, MVCR coordinator
Ron Munkres, Director of Applied Technology
Gene Nelson, physical education teacher
Roy Reiber, high school science teacher
Mike Houk, high school social studies teacher
Gordon Reynaud, high school vice principal
Suellen White, superintendent, Methow Valley School District
Linda Wilson, Vocational Education
Three student focus groups
Community focus group

Study Team for Methow Valley School District

Bruce Miller, NWREL
Sheri Mortimer, special needs teacher, Pateros School District
LeeAnn Gibbs, English teacher, Entiat School District
Patrick Cusack, student advocate, New Market Vocational Skills Center, Tumwater

SUMNER SCHOOL DISTRICT

Site Report Author: Dr. Tom Owens

Introduction

A five-person site review team visited the Sumner School District on January 6 and 7, 1997. The team consisted of Barbara Bilyeu, director of the Center for Change in Transition Services at the University of Washington; Dori Guftafson, K-12 administrator; The Boeing Company; Jim Rich, program supervisor of special education, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction; Dr. Tom Owens, Associate Director of the Education and Work Program at NWREL; and Philip Schneider, safety assistant, Weyerhaeuser Company. As a result of the outstanding efforts of Ron Munkres, Director of Applied Technology in the Sumner School District and his support staff in lining up the agenda and visitation schedule, the team members were able to observe at least six classes, interview several groups of high school students, and interview seven business/labor leaders, three parents, and 25 educators. The site visit activities included an orientation meeting; review of project documents; interviews with District administrators, counselors, teachers, parents, employers, and labor union representatives; classroom observations of academic and technical classes; focus groups with students; and a debriefing with the school-to-work and district administrators.

Context

The Sumner School District provides public elementary and secondary education to approximately 7,100 students living in a 38 square-mile area of southeast Pierce County in western Washington. The city of Sumner, approximately 30 miles southeast of Seattle, has a population of 7,800. The surrounding area is largely rural and agricultural. The school district operates one high school, two middle schools, and seven elementary schools.

The student population is relatively low income, with almost one-third of the students eligible for free lunches under federal guidelines. The school district experiences a steady growth in student enrollment each year and the superintendent expects to open two more elementary schools and a junior high in the next five years. Boeing and several other large companies such as Panasonic and the Port of Tacoma continue to employ a significant number of workers from the community. The number of people working in the service industries contributes an additional 25,000 or more workers to the area.

The Puget Sound region of the Pacific Northwest where Sumner is located offers high-paying employment opportunities with such well-known companies as Boeing, Weyerhaeuser, Microsoft, Intel, Hewlett-Packard, and U.S. West, as well as a number of emerging biotechnology companies. The employer needs of such companies lean heavily towards workers with advanced skills in math, science, and technology. Recently, there has been substantial growth in medical and health-related industries, opening up opportunities in high-wage employment for workers with specialized training.

Program Components

School-to-work classes. Structured classroom observations conducted by site review team members in at least five school-to-work classes revealed the presence of a number of positive characteristics. Students were working in teams and learning from each other, as well as from the teacher. They were asking content-related questions, applying learning to career areas, responding to questions requiring judgment, working on self-selected projects, and were involved in assessing their own learning.

Classes also reflected student-centered approaches to instruction, workplace applications, use of industry standards, integration of academic and vocational learning, opportunities to use preferred learning styles, and opportunities for problem solving.

Career development. At the elementary level, five teachers participated in the four-week Workplace Applications Project last summer. They went as teams into businesses to learn about the skills needed of today's workers, and to observe how school subjects are being applied in the workplace. Several principals interviewed felt this was an important way to update teachers on what is occurring in the workplace, and provide them with examples to bring back to their classrooms. The project also provided opportunities for teachers to identify business people who could be invited to speak to their classes. Staff interviewed expressed a greater need for parent involvement in understanding and supporting the importance of career development at an early age.

Career development activities for students seem to center on bringing in speakers to talk about their careers. All 6th graders were brought to Sumner High School to learn about the career paths. Three years ago, about five students helped out at a Safeway store stocking shelves and learning the job areas, but this was stopped because of liability concerns. Some parents and teachers have met to discuss the possibility of starting a store in one of the elementary schools next year so students can learn to apply some of their learning, such as math. Discussions at another school have centered around the possibility of holding a career fair next year. Several educators spoke of the need for a more comprehensive career guidance program. Some of the elementary school teachers mentioned participating in the Business-Education Links to Learning (BELL) program developed by the Chamber of Commerce to link education and business by bringing business people into the classroom as speakers.

At Sumner Junior High School students are involved in career development activities from 7th through 9th grade. At the 7th grade, students participate in a one-day challenge class designed to develop a good self concept and teamwork skills by demonstrating how different personality types contribute to a team effort. The one-day outdoor ropes course this year involved approximately all 360 7th graders, working with two classes at a time, with both teachers and students participating. Coordinated by a counselor, the ropes course aims to help students get to know the others in their class, build teamwork and leadership skills, and gain in trust and self-confidence. The pre- and post-course surveys indicated that students enjoyed the day and felt they were learning to work as a team. Seventh graders also take the Vocational Learning Styles Inventory to understand their own learning style, and to recognize that people have many different learning styles.

In 8th grade, the emphasis is on helping students recognize their interests, skills, and goals. In their career information unit, students take the COPS Interest Survey to explore which career areas most interest them. Students' interest area is connected to career paths at Sumner High School, and they learn about the training and education levels that these jobs require. Worksheets done by the students show the kind of skills needed for different career clusters and the appropriate high school classes offered. A video on career paths includes information on basic skills, learning skills, personal qualities, workplace teams, life-long learning, and world economic competition. Students can use a booklet called "Plan for Tomorrow Today." Students are also introduced to a wide variety of career exploration resources that can be applied to their career interest area through specific career books, the Occupational Outlook Handbooks, computer programs such as the Washington Occupational Information System, and job shadowing and telephone interviewing of people in the field. Students take notes and do a research paper on their findings. Many teachers have students give oral presentations to the class. Guidance counselors work with students on their four-year plans, career paths, and preparing for a four-period day in high school.

Ninth grade activities include a career day and preparation for high school registration. The career day involved 36 speakers who present information on their specific careers: basic job facts, economic and social values, training and education required, employment and advancement, job attitudes, and the kind of classes related to the job. Prior to the career day, students review their interest surveys, and after the speakers students write a report on what they learned. Prior to high school registration, counselors talk to all classes about career paths.

In 10th and 11th grade, students can enroll in a new class, Careers and Leadership Competency, taught by the career path coordinator. Some of the activities in this class include job shadowing (arranged by the students themselves), peer mediation, aptitude interest surveys, various community service projects, and job safety. The class is structured around five elements with 25 specific competencies: (1) career development (e.g., selecting and completing a job shadow), (2) job attainment (e.g., completing a mock job interview on video), (3) personal skills (e.g., creating a personal timeline for the next 20 years), (4) leadership (e.g., selecting and leading a small group project), and (5) activity competencies (e.g. developing a skit or activity for lunch or school assembly). Students interviewed from this class said they found it useful.

Students in 11th and 12th grades are involved in the career pathways classes and in making plans for their continued education. In December, Sumner High School began using teachers as advisors for individual career paths. One teacher interviewed indicated he had recently been switched from one career path to another and hadn't had time yet to learn much about that path, nor to meet with other teachers about the path. Some of the students interviewed also indicated that although they thought the advisors were a good idea,

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they had found some not to be familiar with the specific content of courses in the pathway, nor of details regarding some occupations in the pathway.

Seniors in the second semester are all required to complete a senior project on a topic of interest and present it to their class. While some students felt this was a useful experience, others indicated it was more busy work. The staff may want to consider using the senior project in the future as the student's expression of their specific plans for the 13th year and beyond. This would combine the integrated process skills of researching a topic, writing it up, and presenting it to others with the career and educational planning they have been doing for life beyond high school.

Work-based learning. Information the site team gathered indicated relatively little was occurring, at least systematically, in work-based learning. If school-to-work is to be truly realized in Sumner it will take a carefully developed sequence of community-based learning experiences that parallel and reinforce what can be learned in the classroom. Issues of liability, transportation, and buy-in by teachers, employers, and parents will all need to be creatively resolved to provide a foundation for successful community-based learning.

The number of students participating in the various school-to-work experiences is significant. According to recent data from the Washington School-to-Work Implementation Survey, out of 3,147 students in grades 7 to 12, approximately 2,400 are involved in career explorations, career fairs, and career pathways. On the other hand, less than 100 students are involved in cooperative education, internships, or school-based enterprises, and less than 25 each are engaged in mentorships, service learning activities, or apprenticeships.

The site review team strongly supports the development of internships in each of the five career pathways, an issue discussed at the December, 1996, Sumner School District school-to-work retreat. This would help integrate the school-based learning that is occurring.

Students with disabilities. Since two of the five members of our site review team are experts in the area of students with special needs, we included this issue in our interviews with staff and students. At the junior high level, services to special needs students were very inclusive and employed a team teaching and case management approach. Students were reported to be well involved in all school-to-work activities and the counselors were working well with the case managers in special education to insure the inclusion of students with disabilities. There were very few community-based activities occurring at the junior high level, and the principal supports the idea of increasing the community-based learning opportunities available for all students.

Concern was expressed over the increasing demands in paperwork related to documenting IEP meetings, some inflexibility in timelines in preparing IEP's, and the fact that 25 percent of the special education students are receiving grades of D or F. The principal expressed the need to address this achievement issue.

At the high school level the special education program is currently changing from what was described two years ago as a parallel curriculum to more of a resource center program that will eventually become a consulting teacher model. Currently there are two vocational resource instructors as well as eight paraprofessionals to support students in vocational classes. There seems to be some question as to how effectively the students with disabilities are accessing the school-to-work activities. There are very limited community-based training opportunities available at the high school level.

The issue of raising standards in vocational/technical classes for students with disabilities was raised. We discovered the need to have the resources and techniques available to adequately provide the students with learning challenges with the achievement levels necessary to successfully participate in the technology classes.

Program Strengths

Two of the five site review team members also participated in a school-to-work site review of the district two years ago. This gave us a chance to note changes over that time period. Among the changes noted:

- A deeper understanding among more faculty of the 13th year concept, and what it implies for preparing students for jobs and education beyond high school.
- New levels of involvement with labor by the district, and a willingness of labor leaders to become involved with school-to-work.
- Systematic follow-up to the earlier site visit recommendations from Dr. Gene Bottoms, NWREL, and other outside observers.

The major program strengths, as reported to the site review team by educators, students, parents, administrators, and business and labor leaders, covered the elementary, junior high, senior high, and district levels. The following are observations by levels.

At the elementary level, the major strengths discussed were the appeal of the concept of the 13th year as something that applies to all students and one that can be developed across the grade levels. Positive involvement of business and industry in career fairs was also mentioned, as was the practice in one elementary school of having students brief their parents during parent conferences about the quality of their own work. In these cases the teacher serves more as a facilitator of the meetings.

At the junior high level, we heard positive comments about the knowledge and commitment of the school administrators toward the 13th year. Career days are affecting a large number of students, and are viewed positively, as is the work of the career specialist. The communication between the junior and senior high staff has improved over the past several years, and there is good communication between the special education staff and school-to-work staff. All 7th and 8th graders are involved in job shadowing and using the *Connections* materials developed by NWREL to help guide the interviews. There is support among the staff for introducing students to the career pathways they will be entering in 9th grade.

At the high school level, there appeared to be support for the career pathways, general support for the new block scheduling (except among some students interviewed), more community/business involvement, and a better image of vocational education than two years ago. The Jobs for America's Graduates program seems to have an appropriate curriculum and uses different learning strategies to reach students.

Across the district there was support for a bottoms-up approach to school-to-work/13th year. A comprehensive vision of the 13th year is starting to emerge that goes beyond federal legislation for school-to-work, and is being strongly endorsed by the superintendent and school board. Staff participation in the Workplace Applications Project during the past two summers was seen as a major contribution to staff development. This project helps teachers understand what is occurring in the workplace, and motivates them to develop classroom curriculum modules based on what was observed in business and industry.

Other important staff development activities mentioned were support to teachers to attend important conferences and share what they learn, use of the SLIG grants, and making time available for staff to visit other programs. Many people in the district commented on the visionary leadership of Ron Munkres in bringing reality to the concept of the 13th year, and in spending the necessary time to develop consortium-wide approaches to school-to-work rather than merely identifying practices for their district only. Several people commented on the December retreat, held to bring together business, labor, and community leaders to work with educators on school-to-work issues. There was also support for continuing to work closely with community agencies such as Communities for Families, which brings together monthly representatives from churches, civic groups, business, social services, parent organizations, and law enforcement to work with educators. Finally, it was mentioned by several people that the district's careful screening process for new staff was resulting in the attraction and selection of educators of quality who support the 13th year philosophy.

Program Concerns

At the elementary level three concerns were most frequently expressed: the lack of clarity around what was expected of teachers regarding school-to-work, the lack of collaboration between the elementary and junior high educators, and the need for broader involvement of business and industry in working with elementary schools.

Junior high concerns included the need for a larger number of students to become involved in work-based learning experiences, the lack of systematic information from the high school about the problems (or successes) of students who have transferred from junior high to the high school, and concerns by a few teachers that there may not be enough career pathways from which high school students can select.

Some high school faculty, students, and parents expressed the need for better promotion of the 2+2 concept among students and parents; the limited number of students participating in work-based learning; the need to recruit more females into electronics and manufacturing electives; the need for a comprehensive guidance plan; the need for teachers serving as career advisors to receive more training regarding the content of specific courses in their pathways, as well as the requirements for occupations within the pathway; and the need for students with special needs to be better integrated into the school-to-work plan for all students.

One recent Sumner High School graduate, now at the University of Washington, took time to prepare a two-page statement drawing attention to the need for more advanced classes at the high school, and for the faculty to give more attention to counseling and preparing college-bound students. This graduate felt the faculty should raise their expectations of students to better equip them to succeed in college.

Across the district we heard the need for a comprehensive K-12 guidance plan; better communication with parents regarding the 13th year, business and industry; new ways to help parents help their own children in career planning; the integration of the separate elements of school-to-work into a single system; and the need to expand school-to-work to all students.

Recommendations

As a result of our two-day site visit, the review team concluded that the district has established a challenging vision for school-to-work and has moved aggressively to become a leader in the area. The recommendations identified below are focused more on ways to improve a good structure that is already in place, and center on three areas: (1) integrating the school-to-work pieces; (2) communicating better with parents, business/industry and labor; and (3) identifying ways to more effectively expand school-to-work opportunities for all students.

Integrating the school-to-work pieces. Because school-to-work is a relatively new movement in the district, and across the nation, there is an immediate need to identify and integrate the critical elements that are part of the system. These include (1) developing and implementing a comprehensive K-12 career development system; (2) looking for ways to better integrate the senior project, block scheduling, career pathways; (3) providing opportunities for teachers and counselors to share what they are doing in school-to-work, and (4) deciding how work-based experiences can be better structured and connected with school-based learning. The district has made some significant efforts in integrating school-to-work, including adopting the school-to-work effort as one of the major goals of the district, and by requiring students to take six electives in their career path area as a graduation requirement.

The site review team recommends a secondary special education program study to address issues of special education delivery models. The study could be done by personnel within the district assisted by staff from the state department of education and outside consultants.

Communications. While the level of communication with parents and business/industry/labor has improved over the past two years, there is still room for greater attention to this area. Parents need to be reassured that their children's participation in school-to-work will not reduce their level of preparation for college. Business and industry leaders need to be pressed to identify more clearly what they expect in current and future workers, and educated about the diverse ways they can contribute to education. These suggestions could range from presenting a single classroom career information session, participating in faculty or student internships, helping to verify student competencies, to serving as mentors. The recent school-to-work retreat involving business, labor representatives, and educators in reviewing the past efforts in school-to-work and planning for the future is an excellent example of improving communications. The recently developed school-to-work video for parents and students, and the parent handbook on the future of the world of work, should be quite useful in guiding parents to encourage their children to be successful with their education.

Students too, need to recognize how they can contribute to the school-to-work effort. They can suggest businesses that might be open to providing work-based learning opportunities, for example. Students can routinely share with other students how they connect their school and work-based learning experiences, and provide feedback to educators about what is, and is not, working in their education. They can make suggestions on how they would like to see school-to-work improved.

Expansion of school-to-work to all students. Since school-to-work is conceived as a vehicle for total educational reform affecting *all* students rather than a special program for only a segment of students, it is important that ways be identified to expand the system to reach a much wider number of students. This is not easy, and cannot be done overnight. It requires vision, commitment, staff training, buy-in from business and labor, and money. One strategy might be to review the key components of school-to-work that are operating effectively in the district and work with the steering committee or other groups to establish benchmarks for the number of students the district would like to see in these activities for each of the next 10 years. Other factors should also be monitored, such as the number of students with special needs involved in each of the key activities. Quality indicators could also be established for school-to-work activities so that the district would yearly monitor not only participation levels for the key activities, but also the quality of such activities and the extent to which each is contributing to the overall goals of the district. The district's school-to-work Transition Council has already established a goal that by 1999-2000, curriculum schedules and logistics will make it possible for all students to participate in work-based learning experiences.

Promising Practices

Although the site visit team noted a number of positive school-to-work practices in the Summer School District, one stood out as a "promising practice" other districts across the state and nation should be aware of. The December, 1996, school-to-work retreat brought together nine labor representatives, 17 business/community representatives, six educators from postsecondary education, and 20 from the district, including the superintendent and assistant superintendent. Facilitated by Dr. Dan Dunham from Oregon State University, the retreat included small and large group discussions involving four topics:

- What participants hoped to achieve during the retreat.
- Three best things that happened in the district in the past year.
- What participants would like to see changed in the district in the coming year.
- Three things that must happen in the coming year.

Sumner School District List of Persons Interviewed

William Allen, instructor, Green River Community College
Joe Baca, Drywallers Union
Terry Beckstead, principal, Sumner High School
Sandy Brook, transition specialist
Dick Chamblin, instructor, Bates Technical College
Mick Copley, Boilermakers Union
Jowell Crowe, health teacher, Franklin Pierce High School
Lisa Edwards, internship coordinator, Bates Technical College
Ann Eutsler, Baxter Manufacturing
Dr. Donald Eismann, superintendent
Sharon Fochtmen, career specialist, Lakeridge Jr. High School
Merl Gorton, retired military
Mike Healy, principal, Liberty Ridge Elementary
Jon Lindstrom, teacher, Emerald Hills
Ray Marostica, instructor, Bates Technical College
Mark Martinez, Roofers Union
Bill Martinson, parent
Vicki Michel, counselor, Sumner Junior High [illegible]
Cuarise Newbury, parent
Binnie Peterson-Bruso, teacher, Emerald Hills
Jim Richardson, substitute teacher, Sumner High School
Pierre Rowen, Sumner City planner
Julie Sandstede, Work and Careers (PIC)
JoAnn Stansell, counselor, Sumner Junior High
Paul Stoltenberg, teacher, Sumner High School
Chris Stone-Ewing, director, South King Consortium
Janice Tornow, special services director
Robin Tosh, parent
Pat Underhill, Carpenters Union
Judy Weaver, principal, Emerald Hills
Kevin Weburg, job shadowing coordinator, Lakeridge Jr. High School
Nancy White, instructor, Clover Park Community College
Chris Wick, English teacher, Sumner High School
Howard Wiley, counselor, Sumner Junior High
Patti Woodburn, assistant superintendent, curriculum

Study Team for Sumner School District

Dr. Tom Owens, NWREL
Barbara Bilyeu, director, Center for Change in Transition Services at the University of Washington
Dori Guftafson, K-12 administrator, The Boeing Company
Jim Rich, program supervisor, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction
Philip Schneider, safety assistant, Weyerhaeuser Company

WAPATO SCHOOL DISTRICT

Site Report Author: Francie Lindner

> *"Kids will meet your expectations — **always!** They just need to know what you expect of them."*
>
> — Leroy Werkhoven, Principal, Wapato High School

Introduction

A five-member team conducted a site visit to the Wapato High School in January 1997 to review the school-to-work system and its implementation process. Members of the interview team included a member of the Washington Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, a representative of the Roofers Union of Tacoma, a middle school counselor in central Washington, a member of the Oregon Department of Education, and a research associate from the Education and Work Program at NWREL.

Context

Wapato is located in Yakima County in the lower Yakima Valley of Washington State. The county lies in the south central region of the state and is a unique cross section of communities, from the largest city of Yakima (57,600) to small farm communities ranging in population from 695 to 11,270. Agriculture is the dominant industry, with major crops including apples, cherries, pears, grapes, asparagus, hops, and onions. A significant number of truck farmers also exist in the area, producing melons and various vegetables.

Unlike the industrialized western regions of Washington State, Yakima County possesses a slow-growing economy that revolves around the seasonal nature of its farming industry. The town of Wapato lies within the boundaries of the Yakima Indian Nation, and its population is predominantly minority, with high poverty levels. According to 1990 census information, eastern Washington demographics have changed dramatically over the past 10 years, with sharp increases in minority representation. Hispanics are the fastest-growing ethnic group in the state. In Yakima County alone, in the last decade, the Hispanic population has increased 5.9 percent. According to the same census data, 6.8 percent of Yakima County residents are non-English speakers.

While the agricultural industry provides the major economic and employment impetus for residents, jobs are highly seasonal, low paying, and attract workers with limited skills and educational levels. Unemployment rates fluctuate through the year from lows of 6 percent to highs approaching 19 percent. The Washington State Employment Security Department (Annual Demographic Information, 1992) listed Yakima County as a distressed area, based on a three-year unemployment average 20 percent higher than the state average.

Yakima County has the highest percentage in the state of residents living below the poverty level. At 20.22 percent. its poverty rate exceeds the state average of 10.29 percent by over 9 percent. Of the Yakima County school districts targeted for school-to-work, all have a participant rate in the free lunch program that exceeds the average of all other school districts in Washington. In the past Wapato has been plagued by gang violence and drugs; however, the school and community have worked hard in recent years to change the image of the county. Of the five largest Washington counties (by population), Yakima County ranked first in juvenile arrest in 1991, and second in arrest for violent crime. The county far exceeds the state levels of functionally illiterate, with 35.2 percent of the population 18 and over lacking a high school diploma or equivalent. Only 12 percent of the population possesses an education level beyond the baccalaureate.

While the Washington state dropout average for the 1990-91 school year was 6.36 percent, Wapato and Toppenish school districts had a 10.31 percent dropout rate. The minority dropout rate for Wapato High School in 1991-92 was a staggering 86.05 percent.

The Wapato High School student body is a rich cultural mix of ethnicity: 56 percent Hispanic, 28 percent Native American, and 14 percent Caucasian. The teaching staff at Wapato High School includes members from these ethnic minorities.

Funding. The school-to-work system at Wapato High School is funded by both federal and state implementation grants. The federal grant is operated through the Yakima Private Industry Council (PIC), an agency that coordinates work-based learning activities for Wapato High School, as well as other schools in the Wapato School District: Toppenish, White Swan, Harrah and an alternative school (PACE). Funding from the state has been designated to Wapato High School, while federal funding reaches the other schools. Although Wapato High School is the most structured school according to the guidelines and components of school-to-work, the other schools are following the example of Wapato in their education reform efforts.

The superintendent, high school principal, vocational director, and school-to-work PIC office coordinate the school-to-work activities. The high school principal has been directly responsible for implementing the program at Wapato high school. It is anticipated that the middle school principal will directly implement the new school-to-work grant to expand the existing school-to-work program. Initial budget plans are proposed by the superintendent to integrate funding from different sources.

Community collaboration. The Private Industry Council coordinates federally funded school-to-work activities with Wapato High School. The PIC's role was primarily the coordination of programs until about a year ago, when they decided to direct all their JTPA efforts with a school-to-work emphasis. Now all in- and out-of-school students in the PICS's summer youth programs will participate in developing career pathways and career portfolios, even if their home high school is not yet using these materials. The PIC's service area includes 25 districts, primarily divided into the upper and lower Yakima Valley. By subcontracting for services, they are able to direct the performance of their subcontractors.

Part of the federal funding is being used by the PIC to develop a county-wide MetSys database system to manage all social services and clients served in the county. MetSys will also coordinate work-based learning and job shadow experiences throughout the county by bringing agencies, schools, programs, and providers together, particularly Yakima Valley employers. The PIC is uniquely positioned for this activity, given the population needs and its ability to network the database with other social services such as job training, postsecondary services, out of school youth, WIC, social welfare eligibility, and Hispanic/ Native American resources and services. Operation of the database will begin in the spring of 1997.

MetStys will ultimately have over 4,000 names of employers, agencies, and organizations that will be used by school-to-work participants to find appropriate services and work-based learning opportunities for students throughout the Yakima Valley. However, the Yakima School District and others are developing their own database system in conjunction with the chamber of commerce, and this duplicated effort might mean competition for the limited work-based learning opportunities in the Yakima Valley.

The PIC has taken the lead because it sees the connection between school-to-work and local economic development. The agency also provides services to the entire Yakima Valley, which puts it in a position to take a more broad-based approach to providing services to a wider range of clients.

Complex issues concerning the PIC and school-to-work coordination for the valley that still need to be addressed are: (1) programs and services may appear to compete with each other, and dollars follow these programs/services; (2) some people may be apprehensive because the PIC has taken the lead in an area previously overseen by local schools; and (3) the PIC has been successful in bringing local business and labor leaders together.

Major socio-economic differences exist between the upper and lower Yakima Valley, along with geographic constraints that affect school-to-work activities (e.g., distances between schools and potential employers). Language and cultural differences make it difficult for members of minority groups to fully participate in workforce development. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that Hispanic and Native American students may not have full access to work-based learning experiences that provide high wage jobs, high technology training, or contacts with well-established local businesses that would lead to further employment. The PIC is in a strong position to ensure that more equitable access is available to minority populations.

There is a need for a centralized method of providing job shadows and work-based learning activities so that businesses have one primary contact and are not subjected to multiple requests.

The Wapato community is small. Parents are familiar with school activities and generally get involved to help out. For example, the annual Bean Feed drew in parents who are field workers as well as those with professional backgrounds to help students raise money for the school. Many minority parents view the school as a central focal point of contact with the outside world, and appreciate that education represents an opportunity for their children to rise above their own economic situation. Wapato parents are aware of school-to-work activities and are generally supportive.

Program Components

Implementation of school-to-work at Wapato High School began several years ago with career pathways and portfolio assessments under the Yakima Valley Tech Prep Consortium. In 1990, with funding from The Boeing Company, an applied academics project was initiated. Since that time the components of the program have been expanded to address federal guidelines for school-to-work implementation. Other components such as LEAP (Learning Evidence Achievement Plan) have been added, along with a focus on the integration of SCANS competencies into the curriculum. Career research, job shadows, and internships were added to formalize the work-based learning components. A description of the 10 components follows:

1. **Assessment of student interest.** In the 9th grade every student is given three different interest tools, including the CDM; sophomores take the ASVAB (Student Directed Search); and juniors take the KUDER.

2. **Career pathways.** All students are on one of the following career pathways: arts and communications, business and marketing, engineering and scientific, health and human services, or industrial technology.

3. **Career research.** All students do research at least three different times using WOIS: freshman in Washington State history, sophomores in 10th grade English, and juniors in U.S. history.

4. **Integrated curriculum.** Curriculum is integrated and crosses between departments (i.e., English and business, shop and math).

5. **Internships.** All juniors and seniors can complete an internship or work experience for credit their junior and/or senior year.

6. **Job shadows.** All students are required to complete at least one job shadow in their junior year (170 completed last year).

7. **LEAP.** All seniors must present their Learning Evidence Achievement Plan to the community in order to meet graduation requirements. Student presentations are made the last week of school and must be a minimum of 12 minutes in length and include how students have used their high school years to prepare for their immediate future.

8. **Portfolios.** All students are required to assemble a portfolio with four main sections, including the student planner, the learner, the employee, and the citizen.

9. **Registration.** Career pathways and future employment plans are used for registration into classes. Curriculum is designed to accommodate the five career pathways.

10. **SCANS skills.** The curriculum is based on the SCANS skills to include the seven work skills employers demand.

Various aspects of school-to-work were a focus of the site visit. The following highlights some of the unique features of the program at Wapato High School.

Integrated instruction. Curriculum integration appears to have a good start, and is occurring in a variety of ways. The English department is the driving force behind integrated curriculum and a central focus for developing the school-to-work system within the school. Integrated classes stress skills in research, writing, oral communications, and other competencies aligned to SCANS. In the junior year social studies class, students further focus their interests with a career research project.

Integration consists of combining courses (logistically in the schedule), or infusing career counseling during course time. However, classic integration between vocational and academics, or true collaboration or teaming with teachers in the integrated courses, needs to be further developed and strengthened.

The 9th-grade skills class, integrated with English, is a required course for all students and provides them with their first introduction to school-to-work. The first six weeks cover the life skills portion, and the second half covers English. As an example of integration, students research a career and write a draft paper in the skills class; in the English class, during the second half of the year, students produce the final draft. According to the instructor, the extent of integration and collaboration between the skills class and English class is limited. In fact, except for the research paper, the courses are essentially separate.

Life skills include social survival, cooperation, teamwork, goal setting, and human relations, among other topics. The instructor believes this course serves a real need because many Wapato students have not yet learned these basic skills at home. Students are introduced to careers through guest speakers from four-year and community colleges, technical institutions, the military, and apprenticeships.

A first-year teacher new to the school-to-work concept learned about school-to-work during the summer freshman orientation, when counselors made a presentation to students and parents about school-to-work. Although he was initially concerned that school-to-work would take away from academic work, he reported that this did not happen. He sees the portfolio as basically a job resume. He refers to career pathways in his course, but finds that it is too early for freshman students to really see the connections to their futures. At about the 10th grade students start making connections, he said, but it's the job shadowing in 11th grade that really makes it happen for students.

The U.S. history course is used as the base for career counseling, but no connection is made between the course and career choices. Counselors simply take students out of the history class for job shadowing activities. This an example of a lost opportunity to strengthen the integration of history with workplace issues. Teaching the history of unions and labor development, for example, would be a means for students to learn about work issues before they go to their job shadow experiences.

Other examples of integrated curriculum at Wapato High School are:

Journalism Class. Students are involved with hands-on experiences in journalism class that replicate the workplace in many ways. They develop several publications, contract with the instructor for the work to be done, and have their own "beat" for which they are responsible. Journalism students contribute to the *Wapato Independent Weekly*, the district newsletter, the school paper, and the student annual. Journalism activities also provide students with opportunities to learn about fundraising (e.g., concession stands) and advertising, and give them a chance to meet and communicate with the public. Students can participate in journalism for four years.

Leadership Class. Most students who enroll in leadership class are officers in student clubs, class officers, etc., but anyone can take the class for an elective, vocational, or English credit. Rather than use a traditional teaching approach, the instructor functions as a facilitator. The first hour of the course is spent on leadership skill development; the second hour is devoted to project time. Students do many service learning projects, such as creating a Police Appreciation Week, or coordinating with FFA to put a sprinkler system in the community park.

Resource Management Class. This new senior-level course required for graduation for all students was designed directly as a result of school-to-work efforts at Wapato High School. The course stresses the "seven basic skills employers want" and teaches basic life skills built upon the fundamental premise of "real" work-world applications. For example, students are exposed to decisionmaking related to (1) getting and keeping a job, (2) banking services, (3) cost of credit and establishing a credit history, (4) insurance, (5) budgeting and smart shopping skills, (6) meal planning and wise food choices, (7) renting and landlord/tenant laws, (8) contracts and tax investments, and (9) creating quality life styles and living situations.

The resource management course is integrated with U.S. history, split six weeks for a .5 credit each. Though referred to as an integrated course because it combines two courses, there is in fact no collaboration or team teaching between resource management and U.S. history sections. They are essentially separate courses. However, the course does provide opportunities for teamwork and group projects, as well as reinforce individual responsibility. Students are allowed to keep working on assignments until they get it right, and are encouraged to use evaluation as a tool to help them learn.

Accounting and Marketing. The school store is a school-based enterprise that grew out of accounting and marketing classes. The instructor uses the store as a learning laboratory, teaching principles such as supply and demand in a "real market" situation. Juniors and seniors are eligible to work in the store, and students entirely run the operation, from managing inventory and ordering supplies, to cooking and providing other services. Students also practice basic employability skills such as punctuality and attendance. The instructor observed that the store has especially helped lower-achieving students learn the basics of small business operations.

Guidance and career development. Wapato High School has a well-developed career planning strategy, with numerous opportunities to assess student interests and reinforce their career plans. It appears that students, teachers, counselors, coordinators, administrators, and parents are all involved. Career interest assessments occur at three grade levels: in the 9th grade the CDM is given, leading to initial selection of the student's career pathway; in the 10th grade students take the ASVAB; and in the 11th grade students take the KUDER.

The summer before 9th grade, students receive a three-day orientation with a Career Decision Making (CDM) skills/interest inventory, and choose a career pathway at that point. Five career pathways are aligned to the Washington Occupational Information System (WOIS): arts and communications, business and marketing, engineering and scientific, health and human services, and industrial technology. Students attend a freshman skills class where they receive more pathway information. Two other interest surveys are administered during the high school years. Up to 90 percent of students remain in their chosen career pathway during high school. If they wish, they can combine pathways with a dual interest, or they can change pathways if they submit a rationale to the principal.

Career pathways guide course selection, help students stay focused on what courses to take, and show the relevance to academics. Students decide to pursue an entry, skilled, or professional level, and they sign up for recommended courses based on their selection. Course selection is a one-on-one activity between the student and a teacher, administrator, or counselor, and parents sign off on the plan. To reinforce understanding of the pathways, all faculty take the CDM to identify their own career interests. Further, to help strengthen students' understanding of the connection to their pathways, teachers ask students to articulate why they are taking their class

School-to-work has a prominent place in the counseling department, where counselors play a pro-active role in comprehensive career counseling for all students. At two scheduled times during the year, in English and history classes, the three counselors conduct career counseling. They divide the class into thirds and each counselor takes a section of students. Activities include monitoring course credits and graduation requirements and evaluating career pathway expectations. Each counselor follows the same group of students for one year, and switch students the following year so that students may benefit from different counselors.

To reinforce their understanding of school-to-work, students are required to research career interests in several courses. The English department plays a major role in these activities, and the strategy appears to be a well-coordinated effort among counselors, teachers, and students. Students receive English credit for the 9th grade career research paper, reinforcing writing skills. In the 10th grade, English teachers help prepare students for their second career research requirement, an oral presentation. In 11th grade, writing skills are once again reinforced in the third career research paper.

In focus groups, students reported mixed reactions to the process of career exploration. Some feel that counseling does not do enough to help them sort out their confusion around career choices. One student said that the career exploration made the process of choosing a career more difficult because she now has more options instead of narrowing what she wants to do. Some are concerned about being held to the occupational choice made at the beginning of high school, and find it difficult to change if there is a mismatch. Other students said they don't get enough counseling to narrow the fields to one choice, and need more direction when they are undecided. "Once you declare an interest they keep focusing narrowly on that pathway," said one student. "I have no intention of pursuing a job in my pathway (arts and communication), but I will keep it as a hobby."

Students didn't like the fact that everyone had to go through the same "hoops" and formula tests (CDM), and that all juniors are required to do job shadows. However, students did have positive things to say about the benefits of job shadows. "I didn't know what I wanted, and wanted them to leave me alone, but the continuous harping made me more aware. I was happy with the job shadow program."

Job shadows and internships. All 11th grade students do job shadowing. The junior year is the most practical year to begin job shadows because the distance students generally must travel for these job shadows requires them to have a driver's license. One benefit of the junior year job shadowing is that the student maturity level is more conducive to helping them make the connection between work and learning.

Local businesses provide opportunities for students to have job shadow and internship experiences. The owner of a Wapato-based construction company who provides job shadowing experiences sees clear advantages to the school-to-work program. He needs workers for his construction company, and school-to-work activities allow him to expose students to the construction trade and provide him with a potential workforce. He also sees school-to-work as an opportunity to benefit the community by making better citizens.

The construction company owner needs workers who know math and science and are able to problem solve. When students come for a 2-4 hour job shadow he explains safety rules, provides an orientation, and discusses the different tasks on the job site. After orientation, students are turned over to the supervisor of the construction project for one hour, during which time they observe the construction laborers. During the second hour, students are asked about their areas of interest, and are matched with a worker. The construction company owner provides summer work experience for three students, who can come back each summer. His three most recent work experience students went to university to study architecture.

Another school-to-work partner is the owner of a small florist shop in Wapato. One student intern at a time works as the school schedule allows, usually two hours a day, two days a week. Usual duties include cleaning the shop, preparing containers for arrangements, serving customers — including using the cash register, and delivery. No wages are paid.

The florist shop owner increases the student's responsibilities on an individual basis. He has no set criteria, he said, but just relies on the student's attitude and abilities. He expects the student to call if he or she cannot make it to work, but little else. He considers the experiences of the students getting out into the work world as the strength of the program. "It shows the kids what work ethic means," he said. He notes two concerns: some students, to retain job skills and knowledge, need a constant work experience (e.g., every day), and he thinks the program should be a year-round activity.

The Community Resource Training program (CRT). CRT is a non-paid internship that provides an opportunity for students to get out into the workplace setting for exposure to, and hands-on training in, career areas of interest. The course description says the focus is on "job skills," and the emphasis appears to be on practical applications of employability skills. Faculty members did not articulate whether CRT has any connection to school-to-work internships.

The business and marketing work co-op program. This program gives students an opportunity to apply classroom learning through paid employment in a business-related occupation. Juniors and seniors enrolled in business and marketing, accounting, or school store classes are eligible. This program appears to be a typical co-op program for vocational students, not a school-to-work activity for all students.

Marketing and promotion. Wapato receives media coverage on various phases of the school-to-work transition program, and on the successes of the school. For example, several TV stations have covered Wapato's school-to-work transition. Interviews with students and the principal have been aired on the three-period day and the senior presentations. The Yakima PIC invited Miss America, a noted supporter of school-to-work, to speak to the community. Students and staff participated with Miss America to produce public service announcements on the school-to-work transition in the Yakima Valley.

Wapato High School's school-to-work transition was featured in a quarterly edition of the Superintendent of Public Instruction newsletter distributed to all school districts in the state.

U.S. Senator Patty Murray visited Wapato High School, and following student presentations she held a roundtable discussion on different aspects of the school-to-work transition. Her visit was covered in the local newspaper. The student newspaper, *The Wolf Howls*, regularly runs articles highlighting school-to-work activities at the school.

Counselors and other school personnel make presentations about school-to-work at community clubs, churches, and other community settings, and talk to parents through phone calls and letters.

Staff development. Staff development helps teachers learn how to present what they are teaching as it relates to the world of work. In the next year, with the help of a grant, two teachers per building will be trained in integrated technology (World Wide Web and online services). They will begin within the parameters of their own classroom and become trainers of other teachers at the middle school. Staff development is tied to the district plan.

Teacher in-services were provided on SCANS and integrated curriculum, with vocational and academic teachers providing hands-on experiences and theoretical groundwork using the CORD applied academics curriculum.

Private businesses provide opportunities for summer internships for teachers. Ten workplace internships lasting 10 to 20 days are offered, and teachers select workplaces connected to what they teach. It is a paid experience, with business paying half.

As one part of a 1995 statewide study of Tech Prep in Washington, the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory staff developed a survey of student work-related experiences. Wapato High School students were surveyed about their knowledge and understanding of workplace issues, along with students from three other schools. The results of the survey demonstrate that student awareness is improving.

Program Strengths

- Involvement of the PIC helps to bring together community participation outside of the boundaries of the education community. This broader approach has many benefits for reaching out to underserved populations and to networking with organizations and businesses on a wider level.

- One instructor is incorporating more group work, including group tests and simulations, into his math courses as a direct result of school-to-work. Students learn how to collaborate on projects, make group decisions on problem solving, and work together to complete a project goal. Students do a project write-up, which reinforces written communication skills.

- School-to-work activities have given students a sense of direction and method of planning for their future. One person we interviewed observed, "Before, students didn't have a clue as to what jobs were out there or exactly what people did in their jobs. Now they *know* or have a good idea. They actually see it, and that's a big plus."

- Students are provided extra help in math by the instructor before and after class as well as through a community program. Heritage College students provide after-school tutoring services to students who need additional help. This connection with higher education has many good possibilities for strengthening the post-secondary connection and for preparing future teachers in terms of their exposure to school-to-work.

- There is strong administrative support, commitment, and enthusiasm. Staff acknowledge and appreciate this leadership, which is having a positive influence on the school-to-work program. Teachers are more likely to take risks in this environment.

- Faculty favor block scheduling, which is especially conducive for project work.

- Portfolios are highly successful, and have brought about more changes in students than any other school-to-work component. The English department is the catalyst and plays a major role in implementation.

- Relationships with and between local business, labor, the Private Industry Council, and Wapato High School are most commendable.

- There is evidence of real understanding of school-to-work (philosophy, policy, and program) and an exemplary personal commitment to school-to-work from local school, PIC, labor, and business leaders.

- The climate at Wapato High School appears to be very positive. Students are polite, on task, and appear to understand the general principals of connecting school to work and/or postsecondary education.

Program Concerns

While the Wapato school-to-work structure is a model for many schools to follow, there are areas for improvement and concern. Following are observations made by the site visit team on areas that need attention:

- There is a strong need for assessment of student achievement beyond the student portfolio and LEAP presentations. Evaluation of students' grades and improvement over time will reflect quantitative impact on student achievement.

- Academic achievement has not been a major focus of the school-to-work program. The focus of school-to-work has been primarily on career exploration and course/career planning.

- Connections between school-to-work and academics are limited, with missed opportunities to show students the relevance of academic subject matter. Academic courses often lack world-of-work connections, though there are exceptions.

- There are staff development needs for curriculum integration and contextual teaching. Teachers have to *learn* how to make real-world/workplace connections to what they are teaching. They need time for planning, integration, and collaboration. Instructors sense a willingness among most faculty to share and work on integrating the curriculum; however, they need avenues for carrying it out. Currently there is no time in the schedule for staff to work together. For example, at a recent staff meeting one teacher talked about a group project his students were involved in. The English teachers expressed an interest in collaborating by giving students credit for the write-up in their English courses. This came about "incidentally" rather than as a planned effort.

- Career pathways are somewhat "loose" in structure. They help students make course selections but need to have a stronger tie to career development and job shadows. When asked what pathways they were in, several juniors did not know for sure. In two instances, they made reference to their pathway by the color of the brochure.

- The LEAP evaluation, by which students place work samples in their portfolio, does not appear to specifically address the students' academic achievement. Including something that may periodically help students make connections between school-to-work and their academic learning will help reinforce the connection.

- The resource management course is integrated with U.S. history, split six weeks for a .5 credit each. Though referred to as an integrated course because it combines two courses, there is no collaboration or team teaching between sections. They are essentially separate courses

- Lessons sometimes include problem sets related to career pathways — for example, how a formula students are learning in science class would be used in industrial technology — but one instructor admits that reference to workplace applications is not extensive due to his own limited experience with all pathways. Presently, there tends to be more emphasis on what math students need for college rather than how it is used in the workplace.

- There was no evidence of a central office-generated list of pathway enrollment furnished to teachers. One instructor said he asks his math students about their career pathways, though he admits he doesn't necessarily use this information to plan his lessons.

- One instructor does not see any difference in academic achievement or retention rate in the students taking his math course. There needs to be a relationship made between these issues in the assessment of school-wide achievement.

- Although career pathways do help students follow a course sequence, students are sometimes placed in a course inappropriately. They may be signed up for a course that fulfills pathway requirements, but transcripts are not checked to verify if a student should be taking the course. According to one instructor, school-to-work career planning is a very good tool but the counselors do not have the time to really assess how students are doing.

- The role of parents in school-to-work is limited, and there appears to be no organized parent group. Parents do attend a freshman orientation meeting and LEAP presentations, however.

- Some school faculty find it "unconventional" to work with the PIC (or more accurately, find it troublesome that the PIC has taken the lead on school-to-work).

- There appears to be no strong relationship between federal/state funding at the state policy decisionmaking level. Also, eastern Washington was not invited to provide input into the designing of the grant process so their special needs were not included.

- The PIC is ready to move faster with the database assessment of profiling students. State-level agencies are slow to respond. Little communication exists between the PIC and OSPI and WTECB, and the PIC works more closely with the national school-to-work office rather than with OSPI and WTECB. The PIC is not on the mailing list for OSPI, nor in the loop of communication around school-to-work issues at the state level. However, the PIC does work closely with the state Readiness to Learn initiative.

- A construction company owner has only had males for job shadows and work experience. At the same worksite, state child labor laws prevent the company from providing paid work experience until students are 18 years old.

Recommendations

- Encourage teachers to develop integrated thinking skills as a way of supporting curriculum integration. Professional development for staff on methods for integration and planning time to develop methods of integration would strengthen the direction and breadth of the program. School staff need to make a better relationship between what students are learning in the classroom and job shadow experiences. Also, they need to improve coordination of students' career interests with job shadows.

- Provide additional emphasis on what happens after high school. The portfolio should be developed as a key to postsecondary options and opportunities, e.g., connect the portfolio and school-to-work to life after high school.

- Elevate the commitment of school-to-work among *all* staff at the high school and throughout the district. It appears that the school-to-work system is not yet "institutionalized" and that not all of the faculty/staff have revised teaching content or strategies toward school-to-work.

- Continue to develop the data system and use it to provide work-based learning opportunities for *all* students that are connected to the students' pathways.

- Survey employers/parents/students to gather quantifiable data about the school-to-work system and its success.

- Develop the relationship between career interests and job shadowing. Students need to be matched for the job shadows of their interests.

- Place a stronger emphasis on school-to-work as a means to improve academic achievement.

Conclusions

For someone not directly involved in Wapato School District's school-to-work initiative, it would be difficult to clearly understand the roles and responsibilities of the major stakeholders/organizations who are participating in school-to-work and its related activities. It may be valuable to identify these stakeholders (including but not limited to PIC, Tech Prep, business, labor, school-to-work board, chamber of commerce, skills center, etc.) with an organizational flow chart to be distributed to representatives from schools, business, labor, education, community organizations, and government.

Several examples of successful education and community partnerships exist within the Yakima Valley. The college offers an effective ABE program and coordinates the local Tech Prep initiative. The local skills center offers programs to most of the neighboring districts, including Wapato. There is a real partnership between business, labor, education, and other entities to provide services to local citizens. And there is a desire to prepare a skilled workforce to support the economic development of the region.

It appears, however, that there is some duplication of services and/or lack of coordination between major stakeholders, particularly those that serve students in the upper valley and those that serve students in the lower valley. There also appears to be some concern/reluctance/apprehension about having the PIC take the primary responsibility for school-to-work throughout the region, and for the PIC to coordinate the associated services for all student populations.

Evidence, however, shows these attitudes are changing. Within a year or two a strong, region-wide, school-to-work system will be in place throughout the area to serve all students. Many believe this will be the result of creating the school-to-work board, and of consolidating employer/services information into a single database that will serve all participants.

Although there has been steady economic growth in the region, wages have tended to be stagnant and there is little high-tech industry or employment. Family participation (parents allowing their children to participate in these programs) is a real problem because program activities sometimes run counter to cultural beliefs or stereotypes. School-to-work can be successful when parents are shown that the program offers viable options for their children's future.

One coordinator indicated her concern that everybody wants to keep their own money. There is a general feeling of insecurity about availability of services. "Having stability in funding and in the political environment would allow us to continue over the long term." Moving local school districts away from their comfort zone is the challenge. Most are certain that some dollars will be available for youth and adults, but there needs to be a mediator to provide services to the underserved.

The success of the Wapato school-to-work initiative is largely due to the effort and commitment of many individuals who understand the principals of an effective school-to-work system and have decided that they will operate this system in their schools.

> *"We all have hope and desire to make this work. But we have to work with the uncertainty and the unknown."*

Wapato School District List of Persons Interviewed

Jerry Baldoz, youth programs manager, Private Industry Council
Patrick Baldoz, director, Private Industry Council
Staci Beam, graduate student
Liz Bollman, resource management instructor
Tamme Bosler, DET office
Dorothy Bristow, Yakima Valley Community College
Kit Brown, school-to-work coordinator, Wapato High School
Mike Brown, business and marketing instructor
Andy Buell, first year instructor (ninth grade skills)
Jim Carvo, labor representative, school-to-work board
Jim Clifton, AG mechanics instructor
Brian Cole, student
Chris Cole, student
Cheryl Dale, Dowty Aerospace School-to-Work Board,, Toppenish
Mely Davenport, Providence Hospital Healthy Communities Program
Marilyn Delozier, counselor
Jim Foresca, Brier Patch Florist, student intern supervisor
Rick Foss, associate superintendent, school-to-work grant writer
Melissa Gamache, student
Kathy Garcia, principal, student teacher program
Bob Grosso, math instructor
Laurel Hata, student
Trnita Houser, grants manager, supervisor, student co-ops
Gail Huibregtse, journalism, English teacher
Janice Johnson, Johnson Variety, supervisor of transition students
Cathy Kehm, counselor, former English teacher
Dana Lemieux, drama instructor
Clark Myers, lead counselor
Mary Ann Myers, student work supervisor
Nick Parker, student
Deanna Quenzer, special education transition instructor
Linda Ricker, vice-principal
Chantel Sandoval, student
Mike Sonsala, special education transition instructor
Janet St. Clair, vice president, Central Valley Bank School-to-Work Board, supervisor of job shadows
Kathy Thomas, school-to-work manager, Private Industry Council
Pete Vanderwegen, superintendent, Wapato School District
Dan Walsh, parent
Scott Walsh, student
Leroy Werkhoven, principal
Shawna Woodward, transition program student
Myron Yolo, applied math instructor
Steve Young, employer/parent

Study Team for Wapato School District

Francie Lindner, NWREL
Rob Fieldman, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board
Theresa Levy, Oregon Department of Education
Mark Martinez, Roofers Union
Kathleen McDonald, Cedarcrest High School

Appendix A
COMPOSITE SET OF SITE VISITATION QUESTIONS

Listed below are eight key areas proposed for on-site inquiry during the NWREL-led case study visits. The intent of the visits is to interview, observe, and gather relevant support data related to these key areas of School-to-Work:

1. The environment
2. Objectives of School-to-Work
3. Program components
4. Student participation and outcomes
5. Program cost
6. State agency assistance
7. Program reflections
8. Promising practices

Of these areas, numbers 3, 4, 7 and 8 are the most critical to describe. Please review findings from the 1995 write up as a base for addressing the new questions. It is likely that various groups, or even individuals within a group such as teachers, will have different perceptions about School-to-Work and its implementation. Thus, in writing up your observations indicate if responses seem to reflect some, most or all of a group. Where there are major differences of opinion try to assess which members may have different views from the others and why. For example, vocational education teachers may be expressing opinions different from supervisors, etc. Whenever possible, try to get examples and support documentation to illustrate opinions expressed. That will add to the richness of our write up.

The numbering system use for each group of respondents is based on the original numbering for the composite set of questions. Thus you may find sections omitted in the questions for any individual group of respondents since no group was asked the full set of questions. Please code your responses to the question numbers as listed to facilitate our compiling the total set of findings.

In addition to this composite set of questions, individual sets of questions have been developed for: STW Coordinators; School Administrators; Business/Labor/Community Members; Teachers/Counselors; Parents; and Students.

1. **THE ENVIRONMENT: Into what kind of educational and economic environment has STW been introduced and how have earlier education reform efforts or other initiatives such as Tech Prep affected the development of STW?**

   A. **The Context**

   Has there been any change in the economic climate of the community in the past two years?

   Has there been any change in the level of local cooperation among education, business, government, and community agencies and organizations in the past two years?

   Has there been a change in the attitude of students, parents, employers, community members and school staff towards School-to-Work in the past 2 years? What evidence supports the change?

   B. **Other Educational Initiatives and STW Related Reforms**

   Have local schools, districts, or postsecondary institutions been involved in other major educational reform or restructuring efforts in the past two years?

   How does the STW program fit into the development of local or statewide education reform initiatives?

2. **OBJECTIVES OF STW: When, how, and by whom was the STW initiative begun? What were its intended objectives? (Ask this section of questions only if not already covered adequately in 1995 write up)**

   A. **Original Initiative**

   From where did the initiative for the STW program come?

   B. **Structure**

   How is STW structured in your community? (organizing structure, committees, decision makers, vision, direction)

   C. **STW Objectives**

   Does the district consider STW to be primarily a way of improving vocational education or as a complete restructuring or strengthening of comprehensive education for all students?

   What are the objectives of your STW effort? Are these objectives linked to the Essential Academic Learning Requirements? If yes, how? Are the STW objectives visible in the District's mission statement or curriculum framework?

3. **PROGRAM COMPONENTS: What is the STW program/effort? What was added beyond what you were already doing as a district?**

   A. **Basic Program Design**

   What is the basic program design or planned sequence from students' perspectives? What do students actually do? Do their experiences one year relate to their experiences in future years? If yes, how? Examples?

Has the program design changed from the initial proposal submitted to the state? If yes, how has it changed? What caused it to change?

Are there other program elements or modifications the school (s) would like to implement as part of STW?

B. Planned Sequence of Student Activity

Is there a "core STW program" for all students — i.e., a set of activities, choices, or courses that are standard for all students?

What are students expected to do over each of the years of the STW program?

Are there career pathways that students select from? Are all or only certain students involved in such pathways? How are the pathways organized?(i.e. what clusters are used?) What student experiences are unique to being in a particular career pathway?

C. STW Curricula

Has STW changed the academic courses that students take? If yes, how? (more required, higher level required, change in course contents, change in methods of delivery.)

How is the curriculum of new or modified academic courses different from what they replace in students' course selections?

Have any new or modified vocational-technical courses been introduced as part of STW? Please describe:

Have any new or modified guidance and counseling programs been introduced? Please describe:

In what ways, if any, do the new/modified academic or vocational courses contribute to "work-based learning" and integration with work-site experiences?

In what ways, if any, do the work based learning experiences contribute to the academic or vocational courses?

D. Guidance and Career Development

What type of STW information is provided to students to help them identify occupational interests and select relevant courses? When and how often is this information provided? Is it provided on an ad-hoc basis — i.e., when students ask for it? Are students required to complete an educational or career plan that specifies courses to be taken at both the secondary and postsecondary levels and their occupational goals?

What specific types of career development activities are included in the STW program design or made available to students? When and how often do these activities occur? Are these activities developed to build upon those students' experiences in earlier years?

What role do counselors have in STW? Do they receive special training or information about STW to help them in guiding students?

What role, if any, do parents, employers, and community people play in the career development of students?

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To what extent are efforts made to promote career awareness through classroom or other school-based experiences? Are these experiences built into the program activities? What specific activities are involved?

Are any efforts made to improve school graduation rates? Are special support services available (e.g., remediation, vocational ESL, special counseling services) to all or specific groups of students?

E. Employer/Community Experience

What workplace experiences are part of STW? What is the timing, duration, and nature of worksite activities? Are they sequenced so that later experiences build on earlier experiences? If yes, how? Examples?

Are all students included in the work experience component? Do students in the worksite component get paid wages?

Does participation in or demonstrated progress at the worksite component of the STW program contribute to students' grades or credits at their schools? Is attainment of competencies at the worksite incorporated into school grades? If so, how are competencies measured? What policies determine how development of worksite skills affect grades? Do participants earn high school credit for work site experience? What criteria determine whether they are awarded credit? How is the number of credits determined?

Do students' work site experience include structured training following a planned curriculum? What are its objectives? Who developed the worksite curriculum? Representatives from the individual employer? A group of employers? Teachers? How do employer staff communicate with teachers about worksite and school tasks and activities? Do teachers visit the worksite? Do employer staff and teachers meet regularly to coordinate learning activities? How often?

To what extent does the work place learning curriculum reflect conscious efforts to help students apply or practice skills taught in school classes? Was it developed or tailored especially for the needs of students? What skills and competencies are students expected to acquire? Are the skills they are taught and the equipment they use up-to-date?

Are students' part-time job experiences integrated with any aspects of their coursework? If yes, how? Examples?

Are students involved in any service learning activities? If yes, what types? Are they integrated with other STW activities? How? Are students taught how to reflect on their experiences? How?

F. Job Placement Services

Are job placement services a part of the STW program? What staff are involved? What activities do they do?

G. School-to-Work Promotion

How are students informed about STW? Displays in school? Promotional material sent home or distributed in classes? Informational meetings? Word-of-mouth? What role do school staff and/or students play? Businesses? What do students do to pursue further information?

Are there any special efforts made to promote interest among special populations and nontraditional groups? How is this done? What results have been observed? Towards which particular groups have these efforts been targeted?

H. Staff Development

Who determines the STW staff development needs for the district?

Which staff participate in staff development activities? Secondary school administrators? Teachers? Counselors? Postsecondary staff? Representatives of business/industry or community organization? How many of each type of staff have participated in the last year?

In what types of activities have staff participated? Workshops? Conferences? Summer training institutes? Educator internships? Other activities?

Which individuals or organizations are providing the staff development activities? Central district staff? District staff? State agency staff? Special consultants? Were staff development efforts concentrated at the local, regional, state, or national level?

What topics received primary emphasis in staff development activities? STW awareness? Curriculum Development? Evaluation? Other? What topics are most needed for staff development over the next year?

Is there ongoing support or technical assistance available for teachers, counselors, and administrators? From what agencies or individuals?

I. Collaboration with Business, Industry, Labor and Community Organizations

To what extent are representatives of businesses, community organizations, and business/industry associations actively involved in the STW program? (How are these individual groups involved in STW? Get examples. Do they sit on the governing board or other working committees? Provide financial support? In-kind support (donating equipment, providing office space for the district or classroom space, allowing STW students to tour facilities, providing speakers for career days or mentors)? Do they participate in defining industry standards and/or identifying or establishing occupational specialties for the program, developing curricula, promoting STW, or providing afterschool jobs for students? Do these people receive any training or preparation for their roles? Do they understand their roles?

Has labor been actively involved in STW? How? Get examples

J. Student Performance Assessment and Program Evaluation

What methods are used for assessing students' performance in school? In the community? Are student portfolios used to record students' experiences and accomplishments and evaluate their progress? If yes, who directs or coordinates this process?

Is there a special database or file system developed by/for the district to keep track of students' school and workplace progress? What is included in this system? Data on courses taken, grades, credits earned, competencies achieved, etc.?

Does the district have a plan for evaluating the implementation and outcomes of STW? What specific student outcomes, if any, are being measured (e.g., academic skills, employability skills, job placement, postsecondary matriculation)? What specific institutional outcomes, if any, are being measured (e.g., collaboration between vocational and academic teachers, involvement by business/industry in education, value of services provided to the community partners)?

How is quantitative or qualitative data for the evaluation collected and analyzed? What methods are used for collecting data? Interviews with key staff? Extractions from student records? Classroom observations? Student questionnaires? Focus groups? Is data collected for all students in STW or for a sample? Are outcomes for students participating in STW compared with outcomes for other groups of students?

4. **STUDENT PARTICIPATION AND OUTCOMES: Who takes part in STW, how well do they perform, and how well do they make the envisioned transition to employment and/or postsecondary education? Who may be left out of School-to-Work?**

A. Participation

Who participates in STW? How many students participate? What is their background, in terms of demographic characteristics and past academic performance? To what extent do students take part in and complete all the components included in the STW program design? What types of students are not served or being underserved by School-to-Work? (ESL, special education, gifted, college-bound, etc.)

What kinds of positive or negative outcomes have been measured/observed for STW students? Changes in self-esteem? Career awareness? Problem-solving and critical thinking skills? Attitudes towards technical careers? Helping break gender stereotypes? Teamwork skills? Academic skills? How do the staff who report these observed changes explain them?

5. **PROGRAM COST: What does it cost to operate a STW program, beyond the cost of existing education programs?**

A. Program Operations Costs and Funding

What resources beyond those available in the regular educational program are required from secondary schools, employers, community colleges, and others for ongoing operation of STW?

What role does state/federal STW grant funds play in supporting the development of the overall STW program or specific components of it? What other funding sources have supported the development and operation of STW (Such as SLIG grants, Learn and Serve America grants, etc.?) How would the program or its pace of development and implementation be different without the outside funding?

What are the prospects for sustaining the level and mix of resources required to operate STW at its current scale? Are there plans for expanding the STW program to include new school or workplace components, or to allow more student to participate? What additional resources (beyond those available as part the regular school program) will be necessary to pursue this expansion?

6. **STATE AGENCY ASSISTANCE: How has the state supported efforts to develop and implement STW?**

   A. **Policies and Legislation**

   What state policies affect the operation of STW at the local level (positively or negatively)? For example, how have such provisions as child labor laws, safety regulations, insurance while at job sites, and teacher licensing influenced the design and implementation of your STW program? What other state policies or requirements affect STW?

   What District policies affect STW? Are any new District policies needed?

7. **PROGRAM REFLECTIONS: What are the perceived major strengths and weaknesses of the STW program and promising practices that might be useful for other local consortia to adopt?**

   A. **Strengths**

   What are considered to be the primary strengths of your STW program? The support of business, etc.? A particular program component or feature of implementation? Program staff?

   B. **Weaknesses**

   What are the perceived weaknesses in the program? Any difficulties getting business or labor to participate? Time available for students to participate? Teacher, parent or student resistance? Transportation? Linking work based learning to the curriculum?

8. **PROMISING PRACTICES: What are the innovative and successful features of STW here that might be adapted by other communities?**

   A. **Successful Initiatives**

   What strategies or activities appear to be particularly successful? What strategies or approaches do you consider to be effective? Why? What ways have been found to actively involve students in the development of expansion of STW? What might it take to replicate these promising practices in other local communities?

   Has the school/district received inquiries from other educators about the STW program or particular aspects of it? What aspects were of most interest?

   B. **Problem Resolution**

   Has the school/district faced any problems that have been resolved in a particularly creative way? If yes, get examples.

APPENDIX B

Washington State School-to-Work Survey

1996-97

This School-to-Work (STW) Survey is intended to provide state administrators and policy makers with an understanding of how STW operates in Washington and potential needs for additional assistance. Please take a few minutes to look through the entire survey in order to determine who are the most appropriate persons to complete all or parts of it. In some cases, we anticipate that the completion of the survey will require a team effort.

This survey consists of two major parts:

Part I contains a set of indicators related to six core elements of STW such as integration of vocational and academic learning. For each indicator you are asked to complete a five-point scale identifying the stage of planning or implementation related to that indicator. Then for each core element as a whole, identify the stage where your district/consortium was just before receiving its state STW funds and your current stage. While various schools within your district/consortium may be at different stages of implementation, we ask you to give us your best estimate for the district/consortium as a whole.

Part II is designed to collect data on the number of students involved in STW, specific STW activities, and assistance and funding that each district/consortium has received from various sources.

Please return to:

Dr. Tom Owens
Education and Work Program
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 S.W. Main Street, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
Phone: (800) 547-6339, ext. 596
Fax: (503) 275-0443
E-mail: owenst@nwrel.org

1996-97 Washington State School-to-Work Transition Survey

Your Name: ______________________________ Today's Date: ______________

Title: __________________________________ Phone: ____________________

Consortium/School District: ____

PART I

Check one of the following five stages of planning or implementation which best describes your project's status for each indicator listed. This evaluation provides a "snapshot in time" and can be compared with past and future performance.

① *Not Yet Considered*	we're going to get to it
② *Planning*	committees now working on it
③ *Early Implementation*	still being pilot tested
④ *Functional*	widely applied, but still under development and/or missing participation of relevant partners; applies to most students
⑤ *Institutionalized*	fully developed with active participation of all relevant program partners; applies to all students

1. Integration of Vocational and Academic Learning

A	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Interdisciplinary teams are involved in developing joint lesson plans.
B	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Collaborative planning time each month is provided for interdisciplinary teams.
C	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Project-based learning opportunities integrating technical and academic learning are provided for students.
D	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Academic courses utilize and reinforce technical and vocational skills/ competencies.
E	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Vocational/technical courses utilize and reinforce academic competencies.
F	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Course competencies reflect community expectations of what students should know and be able to do in the workplace and/or postsecondary institutions.
G	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Project plan provides for all students to experience work-based learning opportunities (paid and unpaid).
H	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Assessments of student performance reflect academic and vocational/technical integration.
I	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Before receiving funds for STW, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in integration of vocational and academic learning?
J	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in integration of vocational and academic learning?

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1= Not Yet Considered, 2= Planning, 3= Early Implementation, 4= Functional, 5= Institutionalized

2. Multiple Flexible Educational Pathways Based on the Student's Career or Interest Area

A	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students explore multiple careers to help overcome job stereotypes.
B	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students explore different careers as they work through career pathways.
C	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students choose a career path based on their interest.
D	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students are able to select from an adequate number of courses relevant to their career paths.
E	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Core curriculum and suggested electives related to students' career paths give them a clear idea of their graduation requirements and where they can go next.
F	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students can change pathways with little or no difficulty.
G	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Career pathway planning includes postsecondary options.
H	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Before receiving funds for STW, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in developing educational pathways?
I	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in using educational pathways to help students plan their 9-16 educational program?

3. Vocational, Career, and Academic Counseling

A	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students in grades 9-16 are assessed on career interests.
B	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students make use of school resources and personnel to make career choices.
C	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students are taking personal responsibility for their own career plans.
D	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students have an individual transition plan that is being implemented and refined yearly.
E	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students learn about scholarships and financial aid available for postsecondary schools.
F	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Counselors receive training in career and educational counseling for students not planning to enter a four-year college program.
G	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students learn about associate degree program entry requirements.
H	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students learn about four-year college or university entrance procedures and requirements.
I	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students learn about military, private business, technical school, and apprenticeship entrance procedures and requirements.
J	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Students learn about entry-level, skilled, and professional occupations, and the education and experiences necessary to achieve specific careers.
K	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Upon graduation from high school those students needing it receive help in job placement based on their selected career preference.
L	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Before receiving funds for STW, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in providing vocational and academic counseling?
M	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your school district/consortium in providing vocational and academic counseling?

1= Not Yet Considered, 2= Planning, 3= Early Implementation, 4= Functional, 5= Institutionalized

4. Student Essential Learning Requirements, Methods of Accurately Measuring Student Performance, and Goals for Improved Student Learning

A	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Project goals and objectives for improved student learning are tied to the four state goals enacted in HB1209 and to Goals 2000.
B	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Essential Academic Learning Requirements (EARLs) are tied to STW activities.
C	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Tech Prep consortium activities are tied to STW activities.
D	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	STW activities are tied to the Student Learning Improvement Grants (SLIGs).
E	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	The project has clear performance standards for required courses and students are expected to meet these standards.
F	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	A project mission statement has been written and guides your work.
G	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Student assessment emphasizes performance using both traditional (such as standardized tests) and non-traditional measures.
H	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Before receiving funds for STW, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in identifying and assessing student performance on essential learning requirements?
I	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in identifying and assessing student performance on essential learning requirements?

5. Partnerships with Local Employers, Labor Unions, Parents, and Other Community Organizations

A	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Educators design learning outcomes with the collaboration of employers, labor union representatives, parents, community members, and school personnel.
B	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Educators involve employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel in curriculum development and approval.
C	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel decide which partners will have primary responsibility for instruction and reinforcement of particular skills.
D	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Employers, labor representatives, community members, and school personnel jointly design and implement worksite programs for students.
E	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Student learning and training plans are monitored jointly by teachers and workplace instructors.
F	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	School-based coursework explicitly incorporates students' reflections from work experiences.
G	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Work-based activity explicitly reinforces academic and technical lessons.
H	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Employers, labor representatives, private and public community service provides, parents, and other community members are provided STW orientation and training.
I	① ② ③ ④ ⑤	Before receiving funds for STW, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in forming active partnerships with employers, unions, and other community organizations?

J ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in forming active partnerships with employers, unions, and other community organizations?

1= Not Yet Considered, 2= Planning, 3= Early Implementation, 4= Functional, 5= Institutionalized

6. Active Participation of Educators

A ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ All staff participate in the planning, implementation, and operation of the STW project (including appropriate non-certified staff).

B ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Academic and vocational teachers receive continued training in applied instructional methods.

C ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Teachers and counselors are provided with professional development and inservice training on how to implement STW.

D ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Academic and vocational teachers actively participate in work-based learning connected to the classroom.

E ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ At least a quarter of all secondary educators have recent business/industry experience through paid work or educator internships.

F ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Secondary and postsecondary instructors are actively involved in developing articulated Tech Prep competency-based curriculum.

G ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ Before receiving funds for STW, at what stage of implementation was your district/consortium in having educators participate actively in STW activities?

H ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ At the present time, at what stage of implementation is your district/consortium in having educators participate actively in STW activities?

PART II

7. **Below are student activities used by some schools in their STW. Please identify which activities have been used in the past 12 months in your district/consortium. Also estimate the number of schools, students, organizations (companies, unions, etc.) and community members (employers, union members, agency representatives, etc.) involved. Please feel free to add similar activities that are not included in the list.**

STW Activity	**Used in Your Project**		**Number of Schools**	**Number of Students**	**Number of Organizations**	**Number of Community Members**
	Yes	**No**				
1) Guest speakers						
2) Career exploration						
3) Career fairs						
4) Career guidance						
5) Career portfolio						
6) Career path development for each student						
7) Certification of student competencies established by employers						
8) Cooperative education						
9) Student field trips to businesses						
10) Internships						
11) Job placement services						
12) Job shadowing						
13) Mentorships						
14) Non-paid work experience						
15) Occupational skills training specific to an employer site						
16) Running Start						
17) School-based enterprises						
18) Senior projects						
19) Service learning activities						
20) Summer youth employment program						
21) Tech Prep						
22) Transition plan for each student						
23) Tutoring programs						

STW Activity	Used in your Project		Number of Schools	Number of Students	Number of Organizations	Number of Community Members
	Yes	No				
24) Non-traditional job fairs						
25) Women in trade fairs						
26) Vocational student organizations						
27) Apprenticeship programs						
28) Other (please list):						

8. **Approximately how many students are involved in structured work-based learning experiences that are connected to school learning, and what is the total number of students in the district/consortium for each of grade level.**

Grade Level	Number Involved in Structured STW	Total Number of Students Enrolled
7th		
8th		
9th		
10th		
11th		
12th		
Total:		

9. **Listed below are categories of students. Please estimate the number of students in grades 7-12 in each category and the number in each category involved in STW. Students can be counted in as many categories as appropriate.**

Category	Total Number	Number in STW
Students of color		
ESL/Non-English speaking		
Academically talented		
Middle majority		
Low achieving		
Students with disabilities		
School dropouts		

10. **Please indicate other types of assistance your district/consortium has received in the past 12 months from business/industry, trade associations, labor, or other community groups.** ***Check all that apply.***

- ☐ Participating in curriculum development—e.g., determining competencies required for occupations, listing tasks and objectives, and creating lab or other contextual learning activities
- ☐ Assistance in defining program outcomes
- ☐ Assistance in identifying/redefining occupational clusters/areas
- ☐ Assistance in promoting or marketing Tech Prep
- ☐ Supporting staff development activities for counselors and instructors through workplace visits and discussions
- ☐ Releasing employees to teach classes in schools
- ☐ Providing speakers for career education days
- ☐ Providing awards or scholarships for students
- ☐ Providing awards or scholarships for teachers
- ☐ Providing equipment or materials
- ☐ Providing space for classes or other activities
- ☐ Providing student internships
- ☐ Providing educator internships
- ☐ Other support (please specify) ____________________

11. **Please provide a quick estimate of the percentage of your project's total expenditures spent on each of the following during school year 1995-96.**

- ☐ General administration of the project .... _______ %
- ☐ Staff development activities .... _______ %
- ☐ Curriculum development and review .... _______ %
- ☐ Equipment or materials .... _______ %
- ☐ Release time for teachers to plan and work together .... _______ %
- ☐ Marketing/promotion .... _______ %
- ☐ Evaluation activities .... _______ %
- ☐ Other (please specify) ____________________ .... _______ %

12. In addition to STW funds obtained from the state, please indicate other funding sources and amounts received in the past 12 months to help with STW activities. Include other state, local, and federal funds as well as funds from private organizations. Don't forget Tech Prep consortium (Carl Perkins) funds that indirectly or directly support your STW effort.

Funding Source	Amount

13. What are your plans for long-term STW funding for self-sufficiency?

Thank you for completing the survey.

Please call Dr. Tom Owens (800) 547-6339, ext. 596, if you have any questions